

CBW

Coach and Bus Week

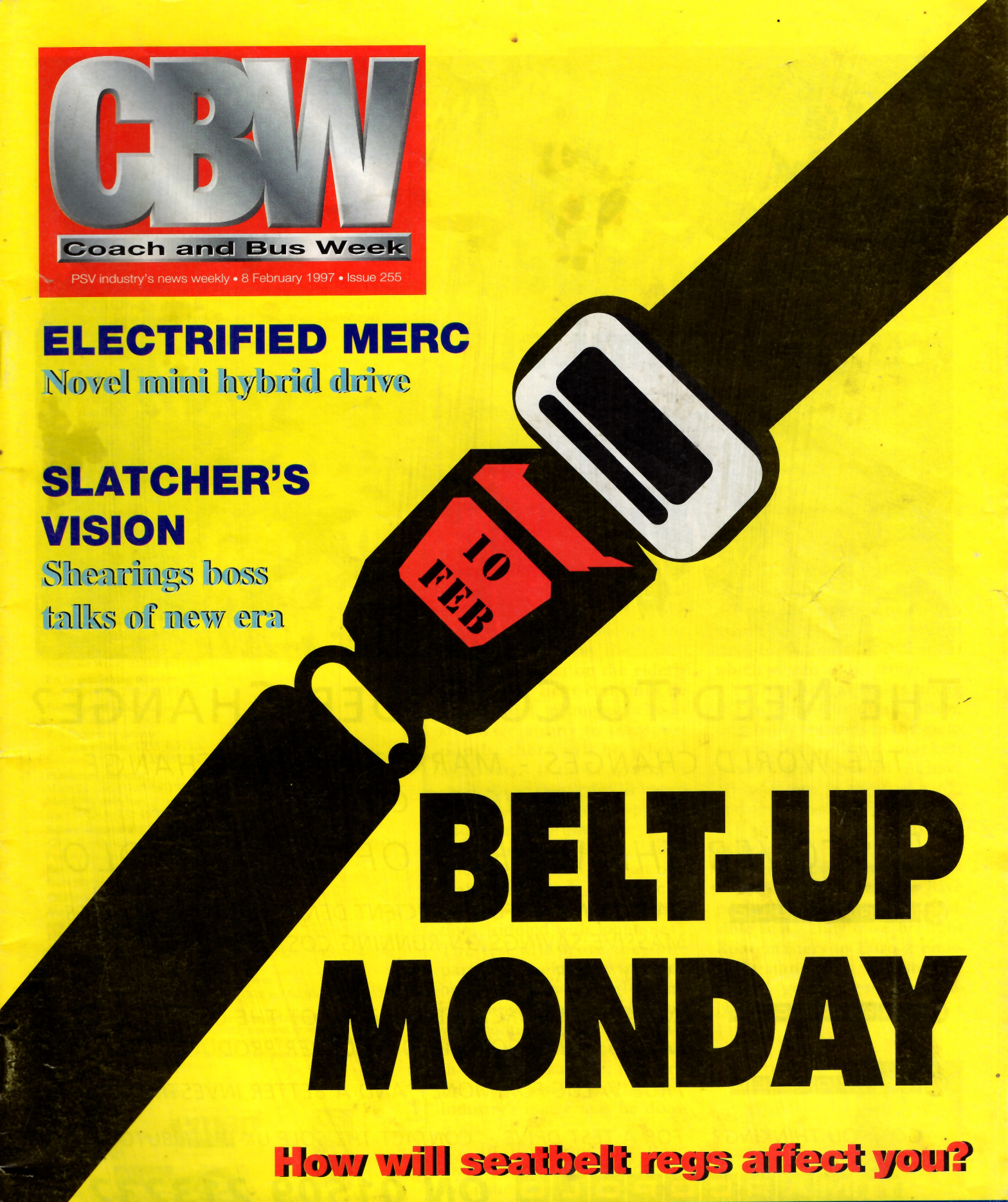
PSV industry's news weekly • 8 February 1997 • Issue 255

ELECTRIFIED MERC

Novel mini hybrid drive

SLATCHER'S VISION

Shearings boss talks of new era



BELT-UP MONDAY

How will seatbelt regs affect you?

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A balanced view is imperative

IN some senses, the pressure group BUSK could be viewed as one of the friends of the coach and bus industry.

Its campaign to force the issue of seat belting, its condemnation of the knee-jerk legislation which resulted, and its ongoing fight to persuade local authorities to spend more money on better coaching for kids are echoed by the industry. The impact on the elderly end of the fleet can only be positive and, as long as schools still have a duty to transport pupils, there will be school contracts. If those contracts can only be satisfied with better coaches, operators will upgrade and price accordingly.

However, BUSK's latest wheeze - to 'crash test' an old, seatbelted coach - is, to echo BUSK's words about the legislation, "riddled with loopholes". The test will prove that one particular vehicle, with seatbelts fitted by a single company, tested in a particular way, will produce a particular result. Should the seat anchorages fail in this one example, however, the repercussions for the PSV industry's image may be disastrous.

In this issue, we have drafted a letter which addresses the issues which will be raised by BUSK's action when it is

reported in the press - as it undoubtedly will be. We urge operators to use as much or as little of this information as they like in a personal letter to the press, and provide a balancing viewpoint.

■ THE efforts of this industry, and its supporters such as London Transport Buses, in addressing environmental problems are something of which we can all be proud.

Despite gas buses being the major focus of attention, originality abounds in the emissions technology market; ethanol and rapeseed oil have all been put in the fuel tank, and the potential for hybridising power sources is being explored.

In this issue, you can find out how LTB's operators have performed a seemingly impossible feat - they have brought Routemasters to Euro 2 emissions standards. A combination of 'green' diesel and catalysts has done the trick.



Mike Morgan,
Editor

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News Digest

■ **BURNHAM-ON-SEA** coach operator, Don Hill, has ceased trading as Burnham Royal Blue. He is now employed by 14-coach Axbridge-based Axe Vale Coaches for whom he continues to operate the rented Burnham booking office which is run on a part-time basis.

Axe Vale partner, Trevor Burnell told *CBW* that his company has bought Burnham Royal Blue's 21-seat Toyota. Mr Hill is expected to auction his other half-dozen vehicles.

■ **NORTHALLERTON**-based Proctors of Bedale has expanded to 30 coaches with the acquisition of fellow North Yorkshire operator, Peter Hall Coaches of Robin Hoods Bay.

Proctors has retained the Peter Hall name for the eight vehicles at the Robin Hoods Bay depot.

■ **THE** operations manager of Plymouth Citybus, suspended for 'irregularities', has resigned from the company.

Nick Smith was suspended mid-January for what the company described as 'procedural irregularities' but the nature of the subsequent investigation has not been revealed. Mr Smith, a former Western National employee, had worked for Plymouth Citybus for 11 years.

■ **MTL Trust Holdings** is preferred bidder for the Regional Railways North East franchise. The announcement follows MTL's success with the Merseyrail Electrics franchise.

■ **GOVIA**, a joint venture between The Go-Ahead Group plc and Paris-based VIAGTI, in which Go-Ahead is the 65 per cent majority partner, is the preferred bidder for the operating franchise for cross-London rail service, Thameslink.

▼ Coach

Coach Line takes

Southampton Citybus coaching sold off

by Mark Williams

COACH Line of Rotherham has bought the Red Ensign coach operation of Southampton Citybus as part of its ambitious expansion.

Citybus had been winding down Red Ensign in recent months, so the deal is for its six double-deck coaches, name and goodwill only. The vehicles will be boosted by two single-deck Volvo Van Hools and run from space rented from Citybus - itself now hotly tipped to become the latest FirstBus acquisition.

"We felt that Red Ensign was right for us,"

said Coach Line md Glen Harrison. "Its double-decks are in demand, and it's a quality operation."

"It's another mode of coaching, which has its own opportunities," said Mr Harrison, who until March '96, was with Scan-coaches in London. Mr Harrison's fellow directors are Alan Draisey, operations director, and finance director Robin Cowlshaw.

Coach Line is setting out to consolidate its position in Rotherham while setting up satellite

bases as separate, limited companies in the UK: "The all-consuming target we have to is to offer quality and a good profile, which these days, is everything," said Mr Harrison. "If you are geographically spread, the benefits are colossal."

Coach Line is expanding organically, too. Mr Harrison is expecting the Rotherham fleet to grow to 20 vehicles this year, most of which will be Volvos. Coach Line's turnover has already trebled since acquisition from Mainline last year.



City Line md Harrison: "al

▼ Bus

Mongrel Merc for Provincial

ONE of the simplest diesel/electric hybrid buses developed has gone into service in Portsmouth with FirstBus subsidiary Provincial.

The minibus takes a Mercedes-Benz 709D and adds an engine management system to integrate a belt-drive electric motor into the driveline, retaining the original engine, gearbox, and running gear. The only modification to the base vehicle has been uprating the suspension to carry more than a tonne of lead-acid batteries.

In trial as part of FirstBus's investigation into alternative fuels, the bus has been partly funded by Hampshire County Council as its part of the Europe-wide ENTRANCE project which aims to promote energy savings in transport. Other partners were Portsmouth City Council and the vehicle's designers, Hybrid Vehicles.

The vehicle, dubbed HybridBus, offers Provincial the advantages of conventional fuelling but the option of fully-electric or diesel-electric drive in Portsmouth's congested city roads, reverting to



Hybrid 709D offers simple route to electric hybrid driveline

diesel-only for more open locations along the route through suburbs Portsea and Copnor.

In common with similar electric drives, the motor has a dual role as power unit and generator, its retardant braking effect feeding the batteries when the bus is in diesel mode, as does the diesel engine. The net effect, say its designers, will be lower fuel consumption.

"The electric motor is sourced in the USA, of a proven design, and it drives through industrial toothed belts direct to the driveline, in an eight-inch extension between the crankshaft and gearbox," said HybridBus md Harry Allen. "In acceleration, it's rated at

40 kW, and 20kW when running."

The simplicity of the design is underlined by its cost - just £100,000 in this working prototype, and £80,000 for the next one ordered. When and if volume orders come, the Wareham firm expects this to drop substantially.

HybridBus chose off-the-shelf lead-acid batteries to keep the costs down - the bus uses 18 of them, guaranteed by Chloride for a year. The most sophisticated component is the engine management system.

HybridBus is to undergo several weeks of trials with the recently-privatised Transport Research Laboratory before going into service.

Red Ensign



consuming target is to offer quality and a good profile... that is everything"

Coach and Bus

Essex deal goes through

H E D I N G H A M Omnibuses of Essex is to buy Osbornes of Tollesbury, swelling its fleet of 140 vehicles.

Hedingham moved premises at Christmas, having bought the former Dairy Crest site at Clacton on Sea. The 90-vehicle, purpose-built premises now house 40 of Hedingham's vehicles formerly at Walton on Naze depot - now closed - and Hedingham's administration.

Osbornes comes with 22 vehicles, split equally into coaches and buses, and adds space for another 50 vehicles for the Hedingham operation.

It is now claiming to have sufficient space for a fleet of 237 vehicles and

the will to run them, despite the stiff competition it faces from Cowies' Colchester Borough Transport and FirstBus-owned Eastern National.

Hedingham operates a mixed fleet of buses and coaches, in every area of work except in-house tours and express work. With sites at Hedingham, Colchester, Sudbury and Burnham on Crouch, Hedingham is rapidly spreading itself thinly across the North Essex/Suffolk border.

"Hedingham can look forward to the turn of the century with great confidence," says md Robert MacGregor. "We will be working very hard over the next few months."

Bus

Report says ban kids

PUPILS at one of Huddersfield's largest comprehensive schools say charging for damage and banning from the bus are the best solutions to preventing serious bad behaviour and vandalism on school transport.

These are the main findings in a project to combat bad behaviour on school buses.

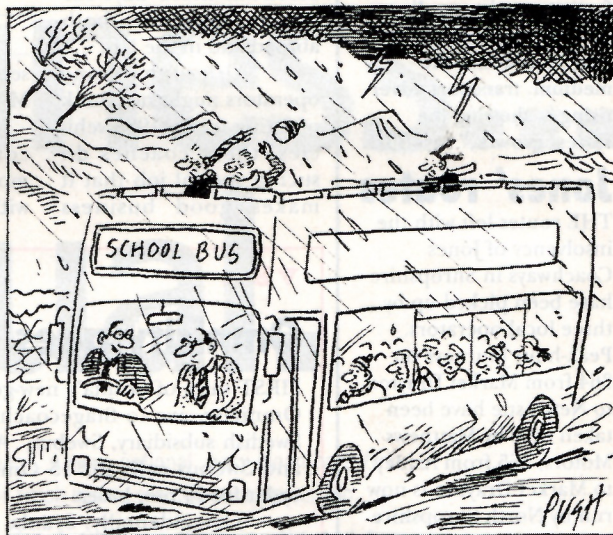
The project was funded by Kirklees Community Safety Partnership focused on pupil attitudes to bus travel.

And, with the co-operation of Honley High School resulted in a plan of campaign supported by Yorkshire Traction. It also reveals attitudes among young people towards public transport which they perceive as cheap, slow, unreliable and uncomfortable.

Honley pupils have a high dependency on bus transport with 45 per cent using school buses and a further 14 per cent using ordinary service buses. Although drivers

acknowledged that there are local schools with more serious and persistent problems, they confirmed that excessive noise, screaming and bad language are common - particularly on the home-ward journey.

Other bad behaviour identified by the pupils are: people hanging about on stairs; smoking; ringing the bell; throwing litter and fighting. Distracting the driver is said to happen frequently.



"I'VE GOT THE SOLUTION - THE ONES WHO MISBEHAVE GO UP ON TOP!"

CBW

●●● inside *TRANSIT* this week ●●● inside *TRANSIT* this week ●●● inside *TRANSIT* this week

News

It was close, but it looks as though they've made it. MTL will float next year following the capture of York-based Regional Railways North East - its second rail franchise in as many months.

Other new winners in the race to run trains include Govia (the Anglo-French joint venture); National Express (for the third time) and FirstBus-backed Great Western. Meanwhile, two final bid-

ders have emerged for Central Trains and Seaco has pledged to invest in tilting trains - if its GNER franchise is extended to 15 years. And the fat cats clean up on Stagecoach's Porterbrook deal.

But bus operators are finding the going tougher on the streets than on the rails. MMC has signalled a harder approach by ordering FirstBus to divest in Scotland. Could Cowie face similar censure over its British Bus mega-deal?

At the end of the day, though, there's always time for another deal. National Express looks set to get Taybus - for a multiple of some 23 times profit. And FirstBus' offer for Southampton CityBus is getting serious attention.

Analysis

Trent and Barton parent Wellglade has been approached to sell by most of the major groups. So far it has preferred to go it alone and

over the last two years has faced its sternest test: fierce competition from WMT-backed Delta Bus. Wellglade won, but at what cost? Find out with our unique profit and loss analysis.

Plus

All the latest jobs and tenders in the industry. Shouldn't you be getting your own copy? Subscribe now. Simply fill out the form on the inside back cover of this issue.

In brief

Safety check

ROSPA has urged operators and local authorities to check the safety of seat belts in minibuses, claiming that older vehicles may not have strong enough seats, mountings or even belts. The safety watchdog has joined with the Confederation of Passenger Transport and pressure groups in urging the Government to introduce a workable seat belt test to the MOT regime.

Consolidation

THE on-bus advertising market has consolidated further with the number two company, Buspak, acquired by poster giant TDI, which now controls 14 per cent of 'outdoor' advertising. "According to Advertising Association figures published recently, outdoor is the fastest growing media sector, up 16 per cent last year, and within the medium, transport advertising is showing the fastest growth," says TDI.

Jones' routes

THE routes left with the insolvency of Jones Coachways in Shropshire have been picked up by three local operators. Peak-hour journeys on 364 from Market Drayton to Newcastle have been taken over by Matthews Motors, 365 from Ashley to Market Drayton is now run by North Shropshire Travel, and 436/438 from Market Drayton Stafford is run by Happy Days.

Noise order

MILES Coaches of Shrivenham, Oxfordshire, has been ordered to reduce operations as a result of complaints about noise. The operator has been told it must keep all workshop noise and vehicle movement within set hours, laid down in planning permission in 1988. Miles appealed against those conditions last June.

▼ Coach

A breath of fresh air

Chambers fits air-con

ONE of the longest established coach operators in Suffolk, HC Chambers & Son of Bures, has broadened the appeal of two of its wheelchair accessible coaches - 1988 B10M MkIIs with Duple 340 bodies - by installing MAC-Hispacold air conditioning in them.

Both vehicles were adapted a few years ago to carry wheelchairs and they are often used to carry groups of disabled people on holidays in Britain and Europe. "All our newer coaches are equipped with air conditioning," said director Alec Chambers. "It is essential these days for passenger comfort, both abroad and in the UK.

"Although many operators might not think of fitting it into 1988 vehicles, these coaches do such a special job that it makes good business



Fitting air-con is good business sense says director Alec Chambers

by Mike Morgan

space and the basic structure of the vehicles has been left unchanged. Small grilles in the lower panels are the only external sign that air conditioning is fitted. The system is controlled from a

panel next to the driver. MAC-Hispacold is fitted as standard on the Scania Century and is an option on Toyota Optimo IV.

■ Accessible feature - pages 25-35

▼ Bus

Omnicity goes to Swebus

FIRST sales of Scania's new-generation citybus, the Omnicity, are to Stagecoach for operation by its Swedish subsidiary, Swebus. A deal between Scania and Swebus calls for 15 Omniculties out of a total order for 77 new buses.

Coincidentally, Scania launched the all-new Omnicity in Stockholm last September when Brian Souter was over in Sweden to confirm the Stagecoach takeover of Swebus.



▼ Bus

Bid for Southampton Citybus

FIRSTBUS plc has announced that it has made an indicative offer to acquire the entire share capital of Southampton Citybus (1993) Ltd.

The company, which has a turnover of around £12 million, is wholly-owned by its employees and directories, following an employee buy-out from municipal ownership in 1993.

Southampton Citybus operates a fleet of 160 buses and employs 420 staff, and is seen as an attractive proposition since it operates a network of mainly urban routes in the Southampton conurbation.

The Office of Fair Trading is considering referral to the MMC.

If the purchase goes ahead it would consolidate FirstBus's presence and make it the major operator in the urban coastal region of South Hampshire.

People's Provincial, who operate services in Gosport, Fareham, Portsmouth, and Waterlooville was acquired by FirstBus in October 1995. In April 1996 Red & Blue Admiral was purchased by FirstBus and all three companies now trade as Provincial.

Provincial already run services from Gosport and Fareham west to Southampton.

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conditions. A new, optional, easy clean hard trim interior finish makes maintenance easier too.

Metrorider 4 comes in three lengths and two widths. Its integral construction offers optimum comfort for passengers and an optional enlarged driver's compartment makes it extremely rewarding and safe to drive.

Another superior vehicle, from Optare, as usual.



OPTIMUM, THAT'S OPTARE

▼ Bus

Low-floors win acceptability

Market share hits 25 per cent

THREE years ago last October there was one low-floor bus in the UK. Now there are over 700 on the road as detail analysis of 1996 registrations reveals a phenomenal swing to this new breed of bus. And it is predicted that half new buses in 1997 will be low-floor.

Yet this time last year low-floor buses accounted for just five per cent of all sales, making the rapid growth to 25 per cent for the full year all the more remarkable.

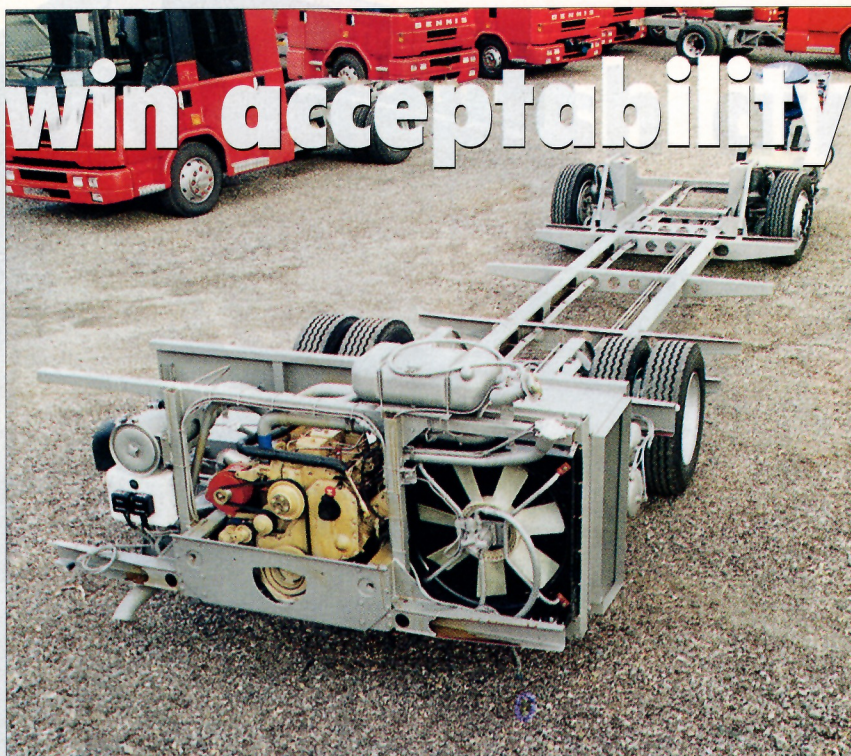
Concealed within the upward trends which have seen the UK bus market grow from around 1,000 units in 1991 to almost 2,500 last year, is the sea-change in low-

floor acceptance. Low-floor single decks outsold double deckers in 1996. But the incoming tide was barely perceptible at the turn of the year with just 12 low-floors out of 196 bus registrations in January.

By August, however the incoming low-floor current was in full flood with 36 per cent of new buses, increasing to around 40 per cent by the year end.

Once regarded as an expensive European innovation, low-floor technology has been taken on-board by British manufacturers and it is their package which has found favour with UK operators.

Dennis with its Dart SLF is ahead of the pack by a large margin, delivering 61 per cent of low-floor registrations in 1996 - that's 364 completed



SLF output has exceeded Dennis' expectation with 755 built in one year

by Mike Morgan

vehicles in the first full production year when the Guildford-based company exceeded its own expecta-

tions for SLF output, building 755 chassis. But there's more than a swing away from standard chassis as total Dart registrations leapt from 767 in 1995 to 866 - including 157 10.6 metre 'super' Dart SLFs.

Roger Heard, Dennis sales director, is convinced that the take-off in Dart SLF sales is down to the concept of an "affordable low-floor product".

Cowie subsidiary, Maidstone & District has milestone Dart SLF number 500 and this 40-seat bus is an example of the Dart's virtues. Competitors costing £20,000 more struggle to accommodate more seated passengers,

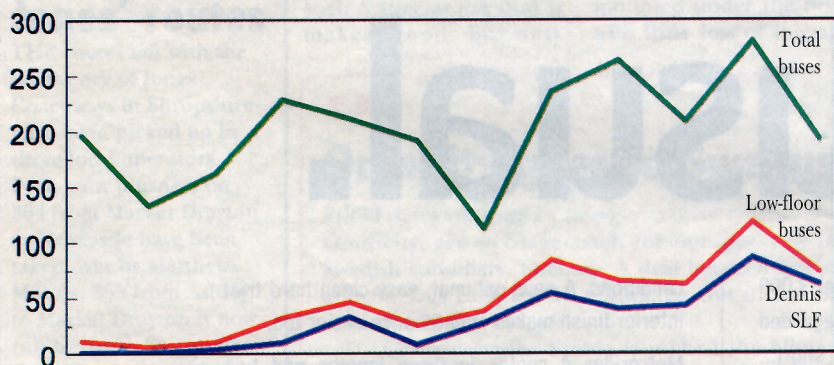
yet weigh more and use more fuel, says Mr Heard.

Second in the 1996 low-floor league was Scania which gained 19.8 per cent with its L113, followed by Volvo's combined B6LE and B10L sales giving it 8.7 per cent. Optare's 40 Excel registrations gave it 6.7 per cent and 23 Marshall Minis were put on the road.

Meanwhile Dennis is bullish. Having doubled output every four years since 1986 its nine production lines are to be increased to 14 by the year end giving it capacity to build 2,500 chassis.

■ Accessible feature - pages 25-35

Monthly low-floor registrations 1996



▼ Coach

Lewis' accessible luxury

A NEW livery designed to take Lewis Coaches of Greenwich into the new millennium, when it celebrates 81 years of coaching in London. The first vehicle to sport the new colours is a converted wheelchair accessible coach.

Lewis director, Peter Lewis, told CBW: "The lift was fitted by PLS Lifts and had to be specially made to fit the high-floor vehicle that we required it for.

"The vehicle it is fitted in is one of only a few high-floor executive wheelchair

accessible vehicles in the country and is fitted with reclining seats, hot drinks facility, video system and toilet/washroom.

"It has done several Disneyland trips for us in recent months with disabled people and has proved to be very popular with all passengers. The vehicle will be used primarily on group holiday bookings and private hire but will also be available for our extensive British and Continental day tour programme."



Converted coach sports the millennium livery

Cowie chooses Shell Advanced Diesel XL

Customers to benefit from first UK manufactured low smoke diesel

IN congested urban areas exhaust smoke from buses has long been a concern for commercial transport operators and their passengers. To help bus companies address this issue Shell has introduced Shell Advanced Diesel XL.

Shell has recently signed a nine million litres deal to supply the new product to Cowie Leaside in North London and in doing so becomes the first UK refiner to manufacture this type of diesel. The new agreement will cover over 320 vehicles at Cowie Leaside who have the full backing of London Transport Buses (LTB).

"We are delighted to be able to help Cowie Leaside in this project. Shell has always recognised the needs of its customers and is keen to respond to their requirements," comments Alex



Shell national account manager Alex Morrison with Cowie Leaside engineering director, Ted Milburn taking first delivery of new Shell Advanced Diesel XL

Morrison, national account manager at Shell UK. Available from Shell

Haven refinery in Essex, Shell Advanced Diesel XL reduces smoke emissions

by around 30 per cent compared to ordinary diesels. It also gives guar-

anteed lubricity performance together with a unique additive package which gives better combustion and protects against corrosion whilst its anti-foam agent ensures rapid refuelling. In order to off-set the higher manufacturing costs of this fuel, LTB is currently subsidising Cowie Leaside three pence per litre. XL will also qualify for one pence per litre duty reduction announced in the recent Budget.

Ted Milburn, Cowie Leaside's engineering director concludes: "As a major bus company we are constantly looking at ways to meet the demands of our customers. Using Shell Advanced Diesel XL is one part of our commitment to reducing smoke emissions and improving the environment for the people who live and work in London."

What else are Shell doing about air quality?

SHELL Advanced Diesel XL is just one of the portfolio of Shell transport fuels which range from conventional diesel though to liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) - one of the cleanest fuels available. LPG can reduce emissions cost effectively over the longer term, despite the necessity for initial investment in engine conversions.

Shell places a high degree of importance on the air quality debate and together with oil industry organisations and legislators, is working towards achieving sustainable improvements in urban air quality, not least through "cleaner" city centre public transport.

There is of course a range of measures available for different uses and situations. The fuel option that is chosen will

depend on many things, including ease of use, impact on the environment and health, costs

and availability. The difficult challenge for both fleet operators and governments is to

determine the right mix of measures which give the most cost effective reduction in emissions.

Regardless of which ever diesel is used, a well maintained engine is of paramount importance. Conventional diesel represents the best overall balance between value for money, availability and vehicle performance. Where emissions need to be reduced further the operator must find a balance between up-front capital expenditure - eg new engines for LPG or fitting catalysts - and operating costs eg - cost of different fuels relative to conventional diesel. This will depend on the local economics.

For more details about Shell Advanced Diesel XL or any other Shell products please contact freephone: 0500 221101



What the operators are saying

Cowie

“As part of a joint initiative between Cowie Group and London Transport Buses to improve the quality of air in the capital, over 70 per cent of our London fleet is now running on ultra-low sulphur diesel and 15 of our Routemasters and nine Metrobuses at Brixton garage have also been fitted with oxidising catalyst units.

The Cowie group uses Shell XL and Greenery evenly across the fleet. Oxidising catalysts are supplied by Johnson/ Matthey/ Eminox and Engine Control Systems.

We are committed to improving the environment of Lon-



A quarter of London's buses are now using 'green' diesel

CentreWest

“All big buses running out of our Westbourne Park garage, base for the Gold Arrow fleet, have been fuelled with Greenery City Diesel since October 1996.

We operate routes 7 and 23 which run along Oxford Street, one of the busiest roads in London, and we full support LT Buses' initiative to improve air quality

At the same time, our drivers report no change in the performance of the vehicles. We are committed to doing all we can to reduce pollution from our vehicles and city diesel is helping us to achieve this.”

London General

“The entire fleet of RM and Leyland National Greenaway buses based at our Waterloo garage has been using Greenery City Diesel since October 1996.

Results so far have shown that there has been a reduction in visible smoke emissions, which has led to an improvement in general air quality - particularly for local residents neighbouring the garage site in Cornwall Road.

A further bonus for the RMs. has been the fitting of special injectors to improve efficiency and performance. We have also been involved in other projects aimed at reducing emissions and improving vehicle performance. These include experiments with synthetic oils.

The possibility of running buses from Sutton powered by CNG is under consideration.”



London General: 'entire Waterloo garage fleet on Greenery'

don for Londoners and are delighted that the Cowie Group is at the heart of such a positive partnership.”

London United

“Total City Diesel is being used by 125 buses at our Shepherds Bush garage, operating Routemasters, Darts and Metrobuses.

The company has received London Transport funding towards the extra cost of the fuel.

The benefits of this low emission fuel are that it reduces smoke on vehicle start up, reduces harmful particulates and virtually eliminates black smoke, thereby benefiting the environment, passengers and our own staff.

We are delighted to partake in the experiment and sincerely hope the results will allow us to convert all our buses to city diesel.”

in London. Over the past nine months, we have been measuring our exhaust emissions using the new fuel, and our smoke emissions, which were already low, have been noticeably reduced.



Petroleum-based City Diesel was subsidised by LT for trials

Bus

RMs are catalysts

Tests show such vehicles

by Mark Barton

LONDON Transport Buses is to fund the fitting of catalysts to 250 Routemasters already using ultra-low sulphur fuel and run by private operators in London.

Tests have shown that such vehicles fitted with catalysts were as clean as Euro 2-engined modern buses.

The catalysts are being fitted as part of LT Buses' emissions research programme - the biggest of its kind in the UK to date. The programme is investigating the potential of 'green' fuels and new exhaust technologies for reducing exhaust emissions. To date that has largely been concerned with low and, most recently, ultra-low sulphur diesels.

Catalysts will be supplied by Johnson Matthey/Eminox and US-owned Engine Control Systems. Cost is around £1,000 per unit. Suppliers claim a five-year working life is feasible, installation is simple and no maintenance is required.

Initially catalysts will be fitted to Routemasters only, said LT Buses principal engineer Simon Brown: "They are high-profile vehicles and when we get complaints about visible smoke and pollution they're normally about Routemasters. As RMs will be with us for some time to come, we felt it was important to clean them up in this way."

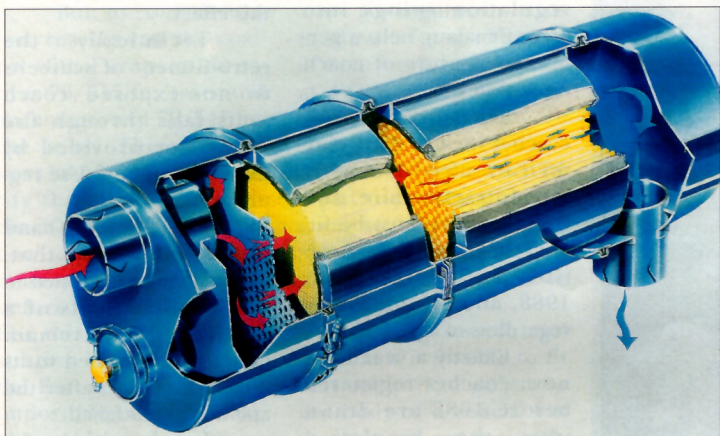
City diesel

MORE than 25 per cent of bus route miles in London are now run using high-quality, ultra-low sulphur 'city' diesel fuels - producing eight per cent fewer particulates than buses running on standard diesel.

City diesel is based on petroleum and can be used in all diesel engines. It is already used widely in Europe, and bus-operating companies contracted by LT Buses to use it in London are CentreWest, Cowie Leaside and South London, Grey Green, Kentish Bus/London

to be fitted with - courtesy of LT

are as clean as Euro 2-engined modern buses



Oxidising catalysts and 'green' Derv can lower emissions

Mr Brown added that catalysts could be fitted to other types of buses at a later date.

Cowie Leaside has been trialing catalysts on Routemasters and Metrobuses using ultra-low sulphur fuel in its Brixton garage for over a year. The technology has been extensively tested at Millbrook Proving Ground near Bedford.

The tests showed that, in comparison with untreated buses one year ago, use of ultra-low sulphur diesel and catalysts eliminates smell and visible smoke. In typical London operating conditions:

- Particulates reduced by around 75 per cent
- Oxides of nitrogen reduced by 25 per cent
- Carbon monoxide and hydro-

carbons reduced by 80 to 90 per cent. These figures compare favourably with the emissions from a new bus fitted with the latest Euro 2, clean engine. In fact, according to LT, the emissions from the older vehicles were found to be virtually the same as new buses.

Clive Hodson, LT Buses managing director, said: "LT Buses' contribution towards the adoption of ultra-low sulphur diesel for all bus operators and recent moves to introduce oxidising catalysts on Routemasters, are definite milestones towards improving the capital's air quality."

These initiatives can only further reinforce public transport's vital role as the most environmentally-sound option for people in London."

use in capital on the up

Links, London General, London United and Metroline.

According to LT Buses, many of its remaining bus operators will move to similar fuels as they become available and as existing fuel contracts are due for renewal.

The latest fuels - supplied by Greenergy, Shell and Total - contain just 0.001 per cent sulphur. Currently, the fuel is around 3p a litre more expensive than conventional diesel. But, following the 25 per cent reduction on duty on green fuels announced in the Bud-

get and expected to apply from May, that premium will reduce by 1p to 2p. LT Buses' principal engineer, Simon Brown, expects further price falls as the market matures: "The cost of ultra-low sulphur fuels will reduce over the next three to four years to the point where the premium is negligible."

Low-sulphur fuel is stored and filled in exactly the same way as conventional fuel and tests in London have shown it produces no significant increase in fuel consumption.



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1993 425 INTEGRAL Powered by Cummins L10 - Full air suspension

53 reclining seats, full soft trim in brown moquette, central continental exit, courier seat, Radio and P.A. tape finished all white.

M.O.T. SEPTEMBER 1997

1989 (January) MERCEDES BENZ 0303 12M

53 reclining seats (VOGEL), red/orange/yellow moquette, courier seat, rear continental door, tinted side windows with roller blinds, power entrance door with peage window, full SUTRAK air conditioning, carpet to gangway and driver's area, finished red/cream.

M.O.T. JULY 1997

1989 (February) DENNIS JAVELIN 12M DUPLÉ 320

51 reclining seats, brown/yellow/orange moquette, rear nearside floor mounted toilet, tinted side windows, power entrance door, finished white/orange/red.

M.O.T. MAY 1997

1987 (May) TOYOTA OPTIMO

19 seats, red striped moquette, tinted side windows, power entrance door, finished all white.

M.O.T. MAY 1997

1985 (February) DAF DKFL VAN HOOL ALIZEE H 12M

50 reclining seats (recent retrim) in Holdsworth Brown moquette, courier seat, rear offside floor mounted toilet, tinted side windows with curtains, power entrance door, finished red/cream.

M.O.T. JULY 1997

1983 (May) LEYLAND TIGER 12M DUPLÉ CARIBBEAN

46 reclining seats, brown/orange moquette, courier seat, rear offside sunken toilet, continental door, rear servery, tinted double glazed side windows, power entrance door, semi-automatic gearbox, finished cream.

M.O.T. SEPTEMBER 1997

1983 (November) BOVA FUTURA FHD

49 reclining seats, grey/red striped moquette, courier seat, centre sunken toilet, continental door, tinted double glazed side windows, curtains, TV monitor, wired for video, cool box, water boiler, finished silver/red/blue.

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From 10 February all minibuses must have seatbelts regardless of age...

▼ Coach and Minibus

Living with

Stage one of seatbelt law starts

by Mark Williams

this effect.

Technically, the retro-fitting of seatbelts to non-exposed coach seats falls through the safety net provided by Construction and Use regulations.

Paraphrased, C and U recommends that, where a seatbelt is fitted to non-exposed seats of a coach, it should remain intact, and attached to its mounting point, after the anchorage has failed.

In other words, the belting arrangement must be stronger than the anchorage. This cannot be accurately tested without damaging the vehicle, and testing vehicles by type would be a costly irrelevance because of the vary-

ON Monday, the first wave of school vehicle seatbelt regulation swings into force... making belts a permanent feature of coach operation.

The law says that all coaches used to carry children are affected, whether on contract or hire, and that seatbelts must be fitted to all coaches first registered after 1 October, 1988, and all minibuses regardless of age.

Exactly a year from now, coaches registered before 1988 are drawn into the regulation though, in many areas, local authorities have already pre-empted implementation by making seatbelts a condition of tender... in some areas, re-tendering all school contracts last year to achieve

Q What is the definition of a 'child,' and will mixed groups escape the legislation?

a A child, as defined, will be between, inclusively, three and 15 years old. Mixed groups will not escape the legislation if the journey has been mainly organised to carry more than three children, i.e., if the trip would not have gone ahead without children being involved.

Feasibly, an attraction provided primarily for education, or children's entertainment, could define the coach party, as does any trip to or from a school. Checking the nature of the journey is the responsibility of the operator.

Scheduled, regular and local services escape the legislation, where they are provided for the general public. In general, these journeys will be

defined by eligibility for fuel duty rebate.

Q What if the children do not wear their seatbelts?

a It is not the driver or operator's responsibility to ensure seatbelts are worn, with the exception of belts fitted to exposed seats in line with, and on the same deck as, the driver's seat, and for all seats in any minibus less than 2.54 tonnes. However, this applies only to children up to 13 years old. Fourteen year olds are considered responsible for wearing a belt.

On all other seats, drivers should advise children to wear their belts, and ensure that they are fit to be worn. Bear in mind that the regulations for PSV driving say: "A driver shall take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of passengers who are on, or who are enter-

ing or leaving, the vehicle." Clearly, this may encompass routinely advising passengers to wear their seatbelts.

Q Parents at a local school insist that lap belts are unsafe. Are they right?

a A lap belt is the minimum requirement to meet the regulation. Fitted correctly, lap belts are a significant safety feature. In the majority of multiple-fatal coach accidents in recent years, the need to retain passengers within the relative safety of the coach structure has been identified, since most injuries have been caused by the vehicle rolling.

In many of the post-1988 vehicles encompassed by the regulation this year,

seat anchorage and modern seat design may allow the safe fitment of three-point belts. This is unlikely to be the case with older vehicles. However, operators fitting lap belts to any vehicle should be mindful that, even in a modest frontal impact, the head and torso of the person wearing the belt is thrown forward into the back of the seat in front. This area should be devoid of any metal grab rails, ashtrays or hard surfaces.

Q Before next year, I want to fit my older coaches with seatbelts. Can I do this myself, or should I get a specialist company in?

a The answer depends on your own engineering capability. Seat-

belts can be bought, and reputable brands come with fitting instructions. However, to make them effective you need to understand issues of seat construction and seat anchorage.

General guidelines are provided in the DoT's Minibus and Coach Seat Belts - advice on Retro-fitting Seat Belts to Minibuses and Coaches, VSE 2/96, available from Department of Transport, VSE6, 2/06 Great Minster House, Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DR.

In practical terms, seating fitted direct to wooden floors is unlikely to be anchored sufficiently. Rear seat anchorage points may need to be strengthened with a steel reinforcement plate beneath the floor, and

Common question



belt regs...

Monday... stage two next year

ing condition of these vehicles.

But, to confuse matters, coaches can also comply with European directives 76/115 for seats and anchorage, and 77/541 for the belts. These regulations have been used to certify the majority of new coach types after 'destruction' testing, and give minimum loads for components before complete failure. For this reason, demonstrating compliance with the European directives is impossible on individual, older vehicles.

Minibuses are stuck with compliance with the two European directives.

Again, this is not a problem where compliance has been sought at the type approval stage by the manufacturer, but costly - if not

impossible - to test on modified vehicles.

No regulation exists to obviate for the fitment of belts on buses, defined as PCVs carrying more than 16 seats, of more than 7.5 tonnes, not designed to exceed 60 mph and incapable of doing so. For this reason, moves by local authorities to seatbelt buses should be resisted.

It is also worth noting that it is feasible to fit belt anchorage points to the body of a coach, but that this will put it outside of the scope of the C and U regulation. As a consequence, the fitment will have to comply with the European directives, and so makes this a potentially more problematic exercise.



...larger vehicles require seatbelts if post '88 and defined as a coach

ions answered

may need to be further connected to the coach's steelwork.

Seatbelt installers should be willing to supply written confirmation of three elements. Namely that: the seatbelt itself meets M3 (coach standard) or M2 (the higher, minibus standard) or even M1 (car standard); that it is installed correctly; and that the anchorages are of appropriate strength.

Q My coaches were fitted with seatbelts last year, and I want to check that they are adequate. What does the label mean?

a On a typical belt, there may be five markings; the type of belt; its approval for European use; the approval authority (by country); the approval

number, gained at testing; and the serial number. A typical belt is shown, with the numbers in this order. The 'E' and 'e' signify two approval levels, and should be present. The '11' refers to approval authority (in this case, the UK). The approval number relates directly to the type of vehicle for which the approval is granted. The first two digits, 04, show the belt meets current approval levels.

Q Once seatbelts have been fitted, what do I do with the fitter's certificate?

a You have completed a notifiable alteration, subject to VTP5. The completed VTP5 form should be returned to the Vehicle Inspectorate, and can be

accompanied by a copy of the certificate (though this is not a requirement).

Similarly, you should inform your insurers of the fitment, and it could be sound business sense to draft a letter and copy of the certificate to any local authority for whom fitment has been a requirement. Keep the original copy, and full company details of the fitter.

Q Since buses escape the seatbelt legislation, could I not use them instead?

a That depends on the conditions of tender or the demands of the school. For short journeys, a bus may be a reasonable replacement for a coach.

In the main, local authorities and schools

have taken the view that use of buses to replace seatbelted coaches is a 'cop out' and that a greater measure of safety is offered by coaches. However, in the same areas, many children use subsidised bus passes to reach their schools.

The definition of a coach is that it is a vehicle of 16 seats or more, with a GVW of 7.5 tonnes or more, capable of exceeding 60 mph. Though the issue has not been tested, it is extremely unlikely that reducing the speed limiter setting will 'convert' a coach to a bus.

Q So far, I've had to replace an average of two seatbelts a week, since they are being vandalised by school children. I've told the school, but they say there's little they can do. Any suggestions?

a In the first place, the school should investi-

gate thoroughly, and you should demand a report of their actions which, if unsatisfactory, will be copied to the tendering authority or school governors.

Remember, your O-licence and livelihood may be at risk if vandalism attracts a prohibition.

However, if you prefer to be helpful rather than confrontational, suggest that each child travelling on the service be allocated a seat number on your vehicle, and have explained to the children that any damage to that seat will be the child's responsibility, regardless of the seat's occupant. Your driver could retain a list for his purposes.

Using a system like this, teachers could also ensure troublemakers are separated, perhaps seated towards the front, and that boarding is more orderly and thus quicker.



▼ Coach and Minibus

Is BUSK scaremongering?

THE 'crash-testing' of an old coach to prove retro-fitted seatbelts are not safe (CBW, 1 February) is being sponsored by pressure group BUSK.

The Belt Up School Kids campaign has enrolled Manchester Metropolitan University's Dr George Read to set up a 'pull' test on seats aboard a complete Plaxton

...the public needs to hear both sides of the debate

Supreme to establish whether the belt fitment and anchorages could withstand a frontal collision.

BUSK has invited national newspapers to see the results of the test, when they have been examined by Dr Read, and says that its objective is to draw attention to legisla-

by Mark Williams

tion "riddled with loopholes.

"Parents across the country believe their children will be safely belted in on school transport from 10 February," says BUSK's press information. "Successful transport ministers

have failed to introduce any measures to regulate seatbelt retro-fitting, resulting in untested specifications being applied in minibuses and coaches throughout the UK.

"A lot of seatbelt fitters are rogues, and only in it for the money," said BUSK's founder Pat Har-

ris. "They are unregulated, and using untested systems.

"We want parents to ask questions about the vehicle which takes their children to school. Parents think their children are being cared for, but all is not what it seems. I want a licensing system for seatbelt installation."

CBW

THE BUSK coach test may generate a large volume of news coverage, some of which will be unwelcome. In conjunction with the Confederation of Passenger Transport, CBW has drafted a letter which can be used, in whole or in part, to balance press coverage. Please feel free to use the information in radio or TV coverage, should you be asked to take part in the discussion

Dear News Editor,

Readers of your newspaper may have been unnecessarily alarmed by a recent publicity stunt by Belt Up School Kids (BUSK) involving the 'crash' testing of a seat-belted coach.

The vehicle tested was chosen by BUSK, and the seatbelts fitted by a company BUSK will not identify. Whatever the outcome, the result of the test is entirely subjective, and not representative of other companies. It is certainly not indicative of the condition of Britain's coach industry nor its school bus services.

The public was at least eight times safer aboard a coach or bus than they were seatbelted into a car BEFORE the introduction of coach seatbelts. Between the years 1989 and 1993, there were on average less than two child fatalities per year using coach or bus travel and, on schools transport, this figure is halved. Contrast this with the 341 child fatalities using other forms of transport in 1993 alone, and this issue is put into perspective

This industry's greatest fear is that the simplistic message from BUSK will frighten more parents into driving their children to school, thus exposing them to much greater risk.

The thrust of BUSK's argument has some sympathy in the coach and bus industry. Through its trade association, the Confederation of Passenger Transport, the industry surveyed the retro-fitting of seatbelts seven years ago, and concluded - as did the Department of Transport's research - that it posed serious technical difficulties in many older vehicles. Despite these doubts, the Government pushed ahead with its legislation to add seatbelts to the entire fleet.

Coaches built after 1988 present no technical difficulties, and the industry is actively lobbying for local authorities to base school contracts on quality specifications, not lowest cost.

It would be foolish to deny that the coach and bus industry, like any other, has a tiny minority of operators who behave irresponsibly or who break the law. Rooting them out is a function of the police, the Vehicle Inspectorate, the Traffic Area Offices which issue operating licences, and the legislation which supports them. Scaremongering undermines this vital exercise, and may inadvertently place an uninformed focus on small but entirely professional operators who provide a lifeline for rural communities.

Yours faithfully

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▼ UK and Europe

The total holiday

AS a league cricket bowler of some repute, John Slatcher knows all about playing to win, so it was no real surprise when he successfully negotiated the purchase of Shearings Holidays.

Mr Slatcher is now firmly in the driving seat as chief executive, having led the buyout team that acquired Shearings for £83 million from parent company, The Rank Group.

But those in the industry expecting radical changes will be disappointed. Adopting the maxim of 'if it isn't broken, don't fix it', Mr Slatcher has underlined his commitment to coaching.

"Shearings is primarily a coaching company and our core business is drawn from the over-55 market. We are the market leaders in stayaway leisure for that group. There is a high degree of repeat business because we have the quality and the package right.

"This has evolved in the six years I have been at Shearings. Then, it was more a transport-led operation but now it is firmly a coaching holiday company

The successful sale of Shearings Holidays in a management buyout put chief executive John Slatcher firmly in the driving seat. Here, he tells William Golden of his plans to take the Wigan company into a new era

and we have developed a high level of customer care."

The strategy now is to develop the position as the market leader for this age group. Shearings owns and operates 35 hotels in resorts in the UK, a portfolio which, Mr Slatcher said, gave Shear-

ings a positive edge. "We are going to acquire more hotels because they give us better control of quality throughout the holiday. The result is a package that very few other operators can offer.

"We also must make sure the hotels we want to

buy are of a certain quality. To be honest, a lot of resort hotels are bloody appalling.

"Talking of resorts, a lot of them don't treat the coach industry as well as they should. Without coach travel, the lengths of their seasons would be appalling,

yet you still get some resorts that don't make coaches welcome."

In some respects, Mr Slatcher said the resorts' attitude was typical of a wider misconception of coaching. "There is not enough recognition of what coaching does for tourism in the UK."

Mr Slatcher said that coaching would remain at the core of the UK operation. "The 55 plus market will continue to grow and the challenge is the way those consumers of tomorrow will travel. In years to come, there will be great pressure on older people not to drive, so they will continue to travel by coach. I also want to develop self-drive holidays to our hotels. Rail privatisation opens up other opportunities and will enable us to more pro-active.

"Further afield, I want to develop our European programme as a more rounded travel option. This year, there are 17 fly-drive options and we have had a lot of success with developing cruises. Shearings also runs a long-haul programme that includes Australasia, North America and South

Special thanks made it worth while

RANK sold Shearings as part of a reorganisation of its leisure division. Angus Crichton-Miller resigned as md of the holiday division to join Mr Slatcher in heading up the buyout team. He becomes a non-executive director, a role he will combine with a similar position at Eurocamp.

The sale was backed by NatWest Ventures and there is another £20 million available for acquisitions. Around 35 per cent of the company will end up in the hands of its 1,000 employees. Half of that stake will go to the buy-out team.

Mr Slatcher, who admitted he had taken out a second mortgage on his house, obviously relished the challenge. "It was very hard work but I really enjoyed it. It was not the first time I had been

involved in a buyout. When I was with Ladbroke Hotels and Holidays, I was part of setting up a bid for Warner Holidays, but it was not successful. But this definitely has been an experience I enjoyed - and I would do it again if the occasion arose."

Away from the world of high finance, Mr Slatcher said the most heart-warming aspect of the deal was when the sale was reported on regional television.

"That evening I got a call from a 91-year-old woman - a regular holiday-maker - who rang to say she was ever so pleased I had bought the company.

"It was quite touching that she had taken the time to find my number and ring up."

▼ UK

Cup contest provides a big draw for Wales

EXHIBITORS from Wales will be on the ball at the British Travel Trade Fair as they look forward to becoming the centre of worldwide attention.

The European Summit is being held in Wales in June 1998 and, the following year, enormous publicity will be generated by the 1999 Rugby World Cup.

The final will be played in the new £106 million National Stadium, which is under construction in Cardiff. The ground, which will have a capacity of 75,000, should become a tourist attraction in its own right. There will be a rugby

museum, bars, restaurants and shops.

Exhibitors from Pembrokeshire (stand W14) will use the show to reassure operators that the area's beaches have recovered fully from the ravages of the Sea Empress oil spillage in February 1996.

Peter Cole, md of Tourism South and West Wales (stand W13), said: "Last Summer, many people in the trade came to see for themselves that the beautiful coast was just as before. BTTF gives us



19-20 MARCH 1997
NEC BIRMINGHAM

an opportunity to talk face-to-face with operators, whose images may still date back to last February's news coverage."

Throughout 1997, Pembrokeshire is commemorating the bicentenary of the last invasion of Britain, when four ships landed 1,400 troops at Fishguard. In July and August, there will be street pageants and re-enactments.

Cardiff Castle (stand W09) is exhibiting for the first time, along-

side Caldicot Castle (stand W02). The latter will have details of its programme of Bavarian Nights and Old Time Music Hall.

British Travel Trade Fair '97 takes place on Wednesday and Thursday, 19 and 20 March, in Hall 9 at the NEC, Birmingham. It is organised by Reed Exhibition Companies on behalf of the English, Northern Ireland, Scottish and Wales Tourist Boards, and the British Tourist Authority.

Operators may pre-register by calling the ticket hotline on 01926 435843 (fax 01926 451963).





At the helm: John Slatcher (right) has a clear vision of how Shearings Holidays will maintain and develop its position as the UK's leading coach operator



Africa." As for the year ahead, Mr Slatcher said that bookings were down 20 per cent in the first three weeks after Christmas, but they picked up in the second half of January. He said: "Europe is well, well up whereas the UK is slightly down, probably because the whole market is moving later."

The Shearings coaches will still be instantly recog-

nised because there are no plans to change the livery. Also, the policy of vehicle replacement will remain the same. "Shearings has a fleet of 300 coaches - mainly Volvo Van Hool, which are good and reliable. They are replaced every six or seven years. The new vehicles work on the Continent and then come back into the UK pro-

gramme. I see no reason to change our policy."

So, after relishing the challenge of the buyout, it is very much a case of business as usual, by providing a quality product for a clearly-defined sector of the market.

As Mr Slatcher said, the message is simple: "If you are 55-plus and want to travel, think of Shearings."

Eurowatch

WEATHER

City	Average temperature last week	City	Average temperature last week
Amsterdam	4C/39F	Madrid	10C/50F
Athens	14C/57F	Oslo	1F/34F
Berlin	1C/34F	Paris	1C/34F
Brussels	2C/36F	Rome	14C/57F
Dublin	7C/45F	Stockholm	6C/43F
Lisbon	11C/52F	Vienna	3C/37F
Luxembourg	2C/36F	Zurich	1/34F

DIESEL PRICES

Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling	Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling
(Courtesy AA Roadwatch)			
Austria	0.56	Luxembourg	0.43
Belgium	0.56	Netherlands	0.55
Eire	0.54	Norway	0.72
France	0.52	Portugal	0.46
Germany	0.50	Spain	0.48
Greece	0.42	Sweden	0.65
Italy	0.61	Switzerland	0.64

HOLIDAY POUND

Country	Currency exchange rate	Country	Currency exchange rate
Austria	18.25Sch/£	Italy	2,570 Lire/£
Belgium	53.43 BFr/£	Netherlands	2.91 Gld/£
Denmark	9.93 K/£	Norway	10.29 NKr/£
Eire	0.98 Punt/£	Portugal	259.75 Es/£
France	8.72 F/£	Spain	219 Pta/£
Germany	2.59 DM/£	Sweden	11.63 SKr/£
Greece	410 D/£	Switzerland	2.25 SFr/£



NORTHUMBRIA Motor Services lost its appeals against conviction on three offences of aiding and abetting drivers to fail to carry an extract of the duty roster on a regular service between Newcastle upon Tyne and Carlisle, after a judge ruled that registering the service in three segments, each of which was less than 50 kilometres, was "a device" to avoid compliance with the EC Drivers' Hours rules (CBW, 1 February).

The company, of 6 Portland Terrace, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear, had appealed to Carlisle Crown Court against the convictions.

For the Vehicle Inspectorate, Malcolm Dutchman-Smith said the case concerned the definition of a regular passenger service, and whether the company operated such a service between Newcastle and Carlisle.

Northumbria was claiming it operated three services, one between Newcastle and Hexham, one between Hexham and Haltwistle and one between Haltwistle and Carlisle.

If it was, in fact, one service, the requirements of

the EC Regulations had been broken. If it was not one service but three connecting services, the Regulations had not been broken. It was of significance in regard to other aspects, particularly drivers' hours.

There was an exemption from the EC Regulations for vehicles used for the carriage of passengers on a regular service where the route covered did not exceed 50 kilometres.

It was common ground that the distance between Newcastle and Carlisle was over 50 kilometres and the distance of each of the alleged connecting services was less than 50 kilometres.

The VI maintained that the segments dividing the service into three were illusory and a sham, said Mr Dutchman-Smith, and it was, in fact, one service between Newcastle and Carlisle, stopping at Hexham and Haltwistle.

The service timetable effectively said that. The bus was driven by the same driver. Passengers could buy a ticket at Newcastle straight through to the other end. To describe that as anything other than one service was using technicali-

▼ Drivers' Hours

'Device' used

by Michael Jewell

ties to avoid having to comply with the regulations.

Northumbria's md Stephen Noble said its predecessor company, United Automobile Services, had held three road service licences for the service for the three sections of route which were now registered separately. All the company's 170 registered services had a route distance of less than 50 kilometres.

Sometimes the same bus did go through from Newcastle to Carlisle but sometimes the bus was changed, usually at Hexham. All the drivers on the service were based at Hexham and, if the driver was changed, that would happen at Hexham.

It was very common to have through booking fares from one route to another. The service stopped at all the towns and villages and at farm gates

Judge dismissed appeal on 'con



One vehicle had been used to cover all three regi

and lane ends.

The vast majority of passenger journeys were intermediate. It took the

bus 2½ hours to travel the 60 miles between Newcastle and Carlisle.

Mr Noble agreed:

▼ Maintenance



CONTINUING maintenance problems have led John Ferguson's O-licence authorisation being cut from eight to six vehicles by Scottish traffic commissioner Michael Betts.

Mr Ferguson, who trades as John Ferguson Minibus Hire, of Main Street, Fellin, near Stirling, appeared before the commissioner at an Edinburgh disciplinary inquiry.

Vehicle examiner William Allen said Mr Ferguson's facilities could accommodate a large single-decker under cover and he had been told a pit was to be constructed.

Between February 1992 and November 1996 nine immediate and two delayed prohibitions had been imposed on Mr Ferguson's vehicles, seven of which were endorsed as showing either neglect or a significant maintenance failure.

Warning letters were issued

following unsatisfactory maintenance investigations in May 1992 and July 1996.

Three immediate prohibitions, all endorsed 'S', were issued to Mr Ferguson's vehicles during a school bus check in September.

'For Mr Ferguson, Leslie Somerville said he had been operating for 14 years during which he had a relatively unblemished record if the prohibitions were disregarded'

Four vehicles were examined during a maintenance investigation in November.

Two immediate prohibitions

Poor maintenance

were issued, one of which was endorsed 'S'. There were gaps in the maintenance records and mileages and registration numbers were not recorded on occasions.

Of the nine immediate prohibitions, four had been issued for floor traps not being properly secured, said Mr Allen. That was indicative of a poor standard of maintenance.

For Mr Ferguson, Leslie Somerville said he had been operating for 14 years during which he had a relatively unblemished record if the prohibitions were disregarded. There had been a bit of a litany of unfortunate circumstances.

Mr Ferguson had initially operated from an industrial estate in Stirling and the maintenance was

carried out by Transfleet, who had adjacent premises. However, towards the end of 1995, Transfleet moved to Cumbernauld and difficulties arose over the availability of their facilities. In addition, they stopped the practice of giving the driver the inspection record.

Mr Ferguson moved to Fellin in the middle of 1996 and decided to undertake his own maintenance, said Mr Somerville. It was conceded there was not a proper driver defect reporting system in place at the time.

The move unfortunately coincided with the purchase of an additional three vehicles, including a 52 seater. The maintenance had clearly not been adequate. A lot of money had been spent on maintain-



to avoid regs

mon sense' grounds in test case



ered services, and through tickets could be bought

- The route was ascribed the number 685 and commenced at Newcastle and terminated at Carlisle
- If a vehicle was travelling the whole route, it would show its destination as Carlisle and that, in most

cases, the same vehicle would go through

● The timetable told the public the company operated a service between Newcastle and Carlisle.

But he said they were operating three services that, in the result, ended up at Carlisle. The timetable did not say that, as it was not required to by law.

"If I buy a ticket that says Carlisle, does not common sense say that you are operating a service between Newcastle and Carlisle?" asked Mr Dutchman-Smith. "That would be the public perception, yes," replied Mr Noble.

Asked why the company did not register the route as one service, Mr Noble replied because he had chosen to register it as three. Asked whether the reason was to avoid the need to comply with the EC Regulations in relation to drivers' hours, Mr Noble replied: "Yes, that is one of the reasons."

He agreed it could be said the company deliberately did not register any service over 50 kilometres in length. He said the other reasons were to do with the way the company operated commercially and the pattern of journeys undertaken by passengers. He was entitled to register services in any way he saw fit as long as he complied with the 1985 Transport Act. He denied that it was one service.

For the company, Christopher Hough argued it was very much a local stopping service and the EC rules were not intended to deal with local bus services. The traffic commissioner had accepted that local services could be registered in that way if they were genuine stopping services. If it was "a device" to avoid the EC rules, it was done with the consent of the commissioner. A "service" should be defined by its registration.

The company had no obligation to run a through service between Newcastle and Carlisle. Its obligation was to run services between Newcastle and Hexham, Hexham and Haltwistle and Haltwistle and Carlisle.

Mr Dutchman-Smith said the intention of the leg-

islation was to apply the stricter EC rules to services longer than 50 kilometres. If, by the simple expedient of registering three separate services, that could be avoided, it "drove a coach and horses" through the EC Regulations.

It was not what it purported to be on paper that was relevant, but what as a matter of fact and practicality occurred. What was in reality one journey could not be artificially split. It could not be the intention of Parliament and the EC that the reality be ignored.

In dismissing the appeals, the judge, Mr Recorder John Briggs said the service was described in its timetable as Service 685 between Newcastle and Carlisle.

There was nothing from the DoT to suggest that registration was indicative of the route being operated.

He found as a fact the regular service here was between Newcastle and Carlisle and the route covered by that service exceeded 50 kilometres.

brings licence cut

ing the vehicles so it was not a question of finance.

Mr Ferguson had taken notice of what had been said to him by the vehicle examiner and he had entered a new contract for the maintenance of the vehicles with Leaseway, of Grangemouth, who would inspect them on a four-weekly cycle. Driver defect reports were now made on a regular basis.

Mr Ferguson was going to employ a full-time mechanic as he realised he could not look after the maintenance himself, and he was proposing to join the Freight Transport Association.

He currently employed five full-time and three part-time staff in an area of high unemployment, and they would have to be made redun-

dant if the licence was revoked.

Mr Betts said Mr Ferguson had been called to a previous public inquiry over maintenance in 1988, but Mr Ferguson said he believed it had been more to do with his transport manager.

Mr Betts said he had two fundamental concerns. Vehicles were continuing to attract prohibitions and there continued to be fairly basic and obvious failings in the paperwork. Arguably not a lot had been done to improve matters since 1992.

Mr Ferguson said he had taken the matter of the records up with Transfleet and the situation improved for a period. When Transfleet moved to Cumbernauld it became completely ridiculous.

Vehicles booked in at 10am were returning at 2pm with the drivers saying they had not been done because they had been unable to get over a pit.

Asked what the driver defect reporting system was, Mr Ferguson

Mr Ferguson was going to employ a full-time mechanic as he realised he could not look after the maintenance himself, and he was proposing to join the Freight Transport Association

said one driver whose vehicle was always on the road on a service run filled in defect sheets. The other drivers on the school runs just told

him when they came in. He said the pit would be completed this month.

He agreed the vehicle examiner had commented about the lack of a pit in July, saying the builders had kept putting him off and, in the end, he had to go to another construction firm.

He said he could only think the floor hatches had not been properly secured when the vehicles had been washed.

His transport manager, who was part time, came in and checked the vehicles and the paperwork.

Indicating he wanted to see an updated contract with the transport manager, Mr Betts said it made him wonder, considering the responsibilities the transport manager had signed up for, when there was no proper driver-defect reporting system for the second time.

He got the feeling coming through this was "something of a tatty operation."

CSW

Star-gazing...

I HAVE been banging the drum of quality for more than 20 years. In the past I have been active in pressing for some quality marking of operations, although I never much favoured star rating of coaches alone. I am not exactly having a change of heart, but now that the possibility of a quality indicator draws a little nearer, there certainly are some pertinent questions which I think merit discussion.

The principal one is this: what will it achieve? It is said that the BSI Kitemark is one of the best-known symbols world-wide. But does it actually make any significant impact on purchasing decisions? Have you ever wondered whether to buy the unmarked widget or the one with the Kitemark on? I can never remember doing so.

Likewise, the star rating of hotels has been around for a long time and is generally understood (the same cannot be said for tourist board grading using roses, tulips and other mysterious symbols). I can think of more than a few hotels with quite a lot of stars where some aspect of the service and value for money I have received ensures that I never cross their portals again. Conversely, I have a virtual network of hosteleries, picked from the Good Pub Guide, with not a star between them to guide me to their doors, to which I go back time and time again.

It, therefore, seems to me that gradings are little more than crude indicators. For, when all is said and done, customers will make buying decisions based on the knowledge and perception of a product or service which they will have gleaned from a variety of sources. I believe that consumers rate personal knowledge highest for this purpose, with recommendation from others in the middle of the scale. Kitemarks, stars and other grading schemes are near the bottom of the pack when it comes to influencing purchase decisions.

That is not to say that grading is worthless - simply that it is not some sort of magic wand. Putting a crest of stars on a coach and some other emblem on the booking office door and on letterheads will do precious little to induce more sales. If anyone thinks that it will transform the industry, or even their own business, overnight into a more saleable product, I fear they are mistaken.

Echoing my comments over a good many years, I say without hesitation that, with or without any form of quality grading, there is no magic wand that someone else can wave to create a bright future for operators. The solution is in their (i.e. our) own hands: match the product and the service to what the customers want; make sure that marketing



strategies make the customers know that this is the case; and then really sell, sell, sell. Just quoting prices or giving out brochures is not selling!

My second question is this: will quality grading actually lift standards? If we simply grade the industry according to its present standards, the result could look pretty dismal! I would go one step further and advocate that the standards should not be determined by the industry at all, but by its customers. We fell into this trap once before when we assumed that the world would come flocking to our doors with money no object if we gave them 'executive' coaches. Neither the new work nor the extra income materialised and school children had the pleasure of going to school by executive coach. I exaggerate a bit, but not that much. The point is that, to influence purchasing decisions, the grading of standards needs to be something that captures the hearts and minds of customers.

That leads me on to the thought that any grading system will be pretty worthless if it is only based on contemporary industry standards. While any such scheme needs to be attainable by any operator with the determination to do so, if it is worth doing it is worth working for. A quality assessment scheme that only delineates contemporary standards will make little impact. One that

forces standards up has a sporting chance of making its mark.

And that leads on to the third question: Will the public know about it? How? Almost anyone of average intelligence could tell you what ABTA stood for; if not the full name, the fact that it provided a safety net to passengers buying holidays. Ask the same people what BCH means and the majority would not know. (BCH stands for Bonded Coach Holidays and gives equivalent, or better, protection than ABTA). Although it is sad that an industry scheme like BCH which has been around for something approaching 20 years is not better known, this is not fatal to BCH for, give or take a moan or two, it does provide a relatively inexpensive way for coach operators to offer the protection of bonding to their customers.

There will be no such 'internal' benefit from any quality assessment scheme. If it is not universally known to those who hire coaches (in this country and from overseas) and to package tour buyers, it will be utterly worthless and, presumably would then be dead and buried before too long. There has, then, to be a huge amount (my guess is something between £1 million and £2 million) to get it launched.

Unsurprisingly, question four is: where is that sort of money coming from? If it could be levied on a compulsory basis (which it clearly cannot) it would average something like £500 per operator - and that is just for start-up publicity. The actual cost of setting up the scheme, registering, inspecting, badging, monitoring and administration would be on top of that.

Being slightly more realistic, say just 200 operators with an average fleet size of 20 vehicles opted to join the scheme initially. It would take a levy of £500 per vehicle to generate £2 million to get the publicity off on the right lines.

Question number five: assuming any eventual system graded the operations as a whole rather than just vehicles, how would the fee be based? It may well be possible to persuade some operators that it is a sound investment to part with £500 per frontline coach to publicise the scheme.

I cannot, however, see operators subscribing at that sort of level in respect of contract coaches (where the spin-off benefits will be negligible) or for local service vehicles (where the benefits would be virtually nil).

While I do not wish to knock the initiative of those currently working on such a scheme, I do think that satisfactory answers must be found to these, and other, questions if any scheme is to have a sporting chance of being a winner.



The star rating of hotels has been around for some time but a system for coaches still needs some careful thought

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Sweet revenge

THEY say revenge is sweet, and Phil White, the newly-appointed chief executive of National Express Holdings, will be relishing his new position at the Winchester head office.

Back in 1994 Phil, as a newly-appointed finance director of West Midlands Travel, was summoned to HQ and made the basic mistake of trying to cross the grass from the parking lot to the main door.

Halfway across, an upper-floor window opened and Ray McEnhill (then in charge) told him to clear off the grass.

Now Phil's in charge, we can expect the diggers to come in and concrete a direct path from car to door but, until then, any intending visitors must take care to keep to the paths, because Phil will bawl you out if you dare to cross the grass outside his new office block.

RM1 on road again

LONDON Transport Museum will turn back the clock more than 40 years when RM1 returns to passenger service next week on route 2 between Marylebone Station and Crystal Palace for two days - 11 and 12 February.

RM1 was the first prototype Routemaster unveiled in October 1954 and in public service on route 2 by 1956.

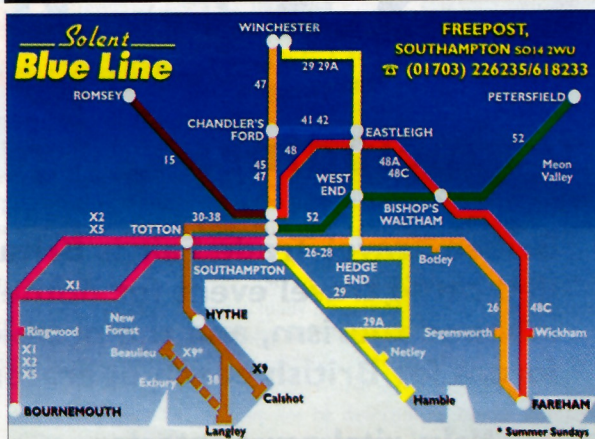
Routemasters did not go

into full production until 1959 after tests and trials were completed. RM1 was brought into the museum's collection in 1989.

The bus will make one return trip on Tuesday 11 February - depart Marylebone 11.45am/Crystal Palace 2.15pm - and two trips on Wednesdays 12 February - depart Marylebone 9.15am and 1pm/Crystal Palace 11am and 2.30pm.



Master of the route: RM1 is back



Small but perfectly formed info card

IT'S amazing how much printed information you can pack on to a credit card-sized information guide.

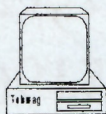
Take Solent Blue Line's new travel planner, for example. One side contains a colour-coded route map whereas the other lists the service frequency, school term dates, British Summer Time and - of course - useful Solent Blue Line addresses and phone numbers. It's legible and very clear.



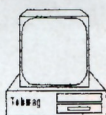
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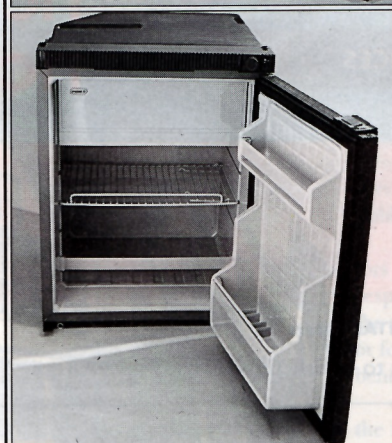
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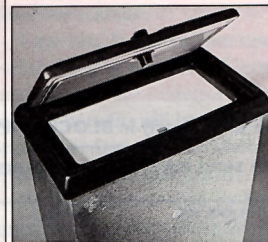


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LETTER OF THE WEEK



Don't underestimate the role of CPT in lobbying

From Stephen Barber

I have read with some interest the continuing correspondence regarding the future or otherwise of The Coach Association.

As one who was involved heavily with the predecessor of TCA (Namely, the Coach Industry Action Group), I feel it not inappropriate to enter the current debate. At the time of the birth of CIAG there was a concern among a number of companies that CPT, for a number of reasons (including funding), was not as involved in Parliamentary lobbying as we would have liked, certainly in respect of coaching issues.

At this point we had to make a simple decision: either shut up or put up, and we chose the latter route and invested in a professional lobbying organisation. Since those days, however, times have changed greatly and, over recent years, CPT has worked very hard to allay any fears that we had about its ability to gain whatever can be gained by close and continual contact with civil servants and politicians.

It is also important to talk to council-

lors and policymakers from government and opposition parties as CPT does through its presence at the major party conferences. The coach and bus literature produced for this year's conferences was very impressive.

It is clear from recent statements made by the Government and the Labour Party that they have a clear knowledge of the industry position on a number of issues, undoubtedly as a direct result of CPT's lobbying activities.

While all professional lobbyists have contact in Westminster, there is more to lobbying than that alone. As was shown on a recent television documentary, courting back-bench MPs is only of limited use.

Clearly those involved in the current debate have to make their own decision as Messrs Wiper and Slatcher appear to have done. They should not, however, underestimate the role of CPT in getting the industry voice heard in the relevant place.

Stephen Barber
Operations director
Wallace Arnold
Leeds

Write to: The Editor
Coach and Bus Week
EMAP Automotive Ltd

Wentworth House
Wentworth Street
Peterborough PE1 1DS
fax: 01733 467154

e-mail: FrankF@
automotive.emap.co.uk



Keep those letters rolling in. If requested, we will publish them anonymously, but always include your full name (ie, first name and surname), address and telephone number



CORGI
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Letter of the week
wins a Corgi
Classics model bus

Belts a waste of cash

From Anon

My local county council has introduced this school year the rule that all schools service vehicles must be fitted with seatbelts. In theory this is a very good idea, it keeps the children safe and shows the parents of the children concerned they do actually care about the safety aspect and not just the cost. My query is not with this but are they necessary?

Seatbelts have only recently become an issue, ever since the tragic minibus accident on the M40 a few years ago. If I remember rightly the vehicle caught fire - just such a situation where I believe the use of seatbelts could exacerbate the danger as I think it far more likely passengers, especially children, would panic and this would cause more deaths.

I also do not believe in seatbelts in school buses. As I said before, in theory they are a very good idea but in practice they are an expensive waste of money. Once you have 53 school children on a coach and especially when it is the end of the day and they are all glad to be going home you can count easily on the fingers of one hand the number of children who use belts. They are more likely to be used as weapons to fight one another or just one more thing to vandalise and set fire to.

Apart from this aspect the cost involved to the county council is enormous. Before the

seatbelts were fitted to coaches the average cost to the county council was between £60-£80 per vehicle per day while now in some cases this has risen to £140 per vehicle per day. Along with the other rule they brought in this school year that double-deck buses cannot transport children more than three miles, thereby adding to the numbers of school vehicles needed to transport the children, this has caused a shocking amount of money to be wasted.

I firmly believe the use of seatbelts should be restricted to coach tours.

Name and address supplied

Committed to DPTAC

From Roy McDonald

I refer to your CTA Preview feature (CBW, 9 November 1996) highlighting the display of vehicles by Jubilee Conversions.

I would like to correct a misleading comment in the article concerning the Renault Master conversion featured. Merseyside does not apply a "tough, homespun DPTAC standard" as suggested in your article, but is fully committed to the adoption of full National DPTAC standards for vehicles used on Merseytravel supported bus services.

To this end, approximately 50 per cent of all current non-school and industrial contracted services require the use of DPTAC standard vehicles, with the remainder to be progressively

converted to DPTAC standards as they are renewed.

Roy McDonald
Senior bus services officer
Merseytravel
Liverpool

Coach, bus, and train

From Tim Hotchkiss

Re your editorial (CBW, 25 January) referring to training, or rather the lack of it within the bus industry.

It might interest your readers to know that Assured Performance Group is from April 1997 offering training courses in the technical aspects of airbraking systems, suitable for all levels of fitters and mechanics.

The course instructor has over 30 years experience as an instructor on air systems for buses and trucks.

Details are available from the technical support engineer at the address below.

Tim Hotchkiss
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Don't wait for 'D-Day'

Is the accessible transport market dictated by the purse strings of local government, or is there room for operators to set the budget? Mark Williams examines the issues

TIME was when the contact operators had with accessible transport was entirely a reaction to direct demand. As handicapped people and their associations began to examine the possibilities of access to public transport, they were faced with little choice but to run their own vehicle. That picture is changing rapidly, buoyed by the Disability Discrimination Act and the workings of Europe.

Despite their popularity, dial-a-ride schemes run by charitable organisations may have had their day. The mood is for public transport to be taken literally; transport for all of the public, without technical discrimination. And the advent of the low-floor bus has brought that possibility inexorably closer to the operator.

Local authorities throughout the country are now looking more seriously at capital support for low-floor vehicles, not least because there may be opportunities for service bus transport to replace expensive journeys by dedicated vehicles and staff. And reducing the need for dedicated transport is now viewed as a priority by the handicapped themselves.

The change in mood has great potential for development of the public transport network. Providing adequate transport for the mobility-impaired public is often the province



Wheelchair restraint system

WEST London Dial-a-Ride has chosen this UVG-built, Mercedes-Benz 611D-based vehicle for its latest vehicle. Built to carry up to three wheelchairs on Unwin tracking, and equipped with Rescroft semi high-back seats, the vehicle is fitted with thermostatic

Eberspacher heating which uses the engine coolant and so also helps cold-starting.

The minibus is the centrepiece of UVG's stand at the International Commercial Vehicle Bodywork Show, at the NEC on 25 to 27 February

of the local authority; supplying public transport is the talent of operators. The time is fast approaching when the two will meet, whether they like it or not.

"The Disability Discrimination Act gives us an ideal opportunity to build on the recent, excellent progress towards accessible public transport," transport secretary Sir George Young has told the Disabled Persons' Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC). "The transport industry has reacted well over recent years to advice and guidance such as the DPTAC specification for buses.

"Under the new Act, we will make regulations that will require all future buses... to be accessible to disabled people, including those who want to travel in wheelchairs. The

date for implementation of the rail accessibility regulations on new rolling stock has already been set as 31 December, 1998. For buses and taxis, we will be taking views on sensible implementation dates in the course of consultation."

The agenda is, therefore, set, and using the additional lever of widespread general support for Quality Partnership bus schemes, it doesn't require rose-tinted spectacles to envisage the attractiveness of a once-and-for-all subsidy providing savings now, and anticipating the inevitable. Where such vision is lacking in local government, it is down to operators to provide persuasion.

Of course, accessible service buses are not the answer to everyone's prob- ▶▶▶

...don't wait for 'D-Day'

lems. In rural districts and many towns and cities, the door-to-door service provided by accessible minibuses is a lifeline. But, once again, the market has become dominated by short-term budgetary considerations rather than long-term decisions based on quality.

Talk to the vehicle converters; selling accessible transport to authorities and voluntary organisations is largely a question of slashing the price. Yet the vehicles which

result often fall below the quality required for the general public. The disabled are, in effect, getting second best.

How many organisations take their dilemma to the commercial operator to find the answers? In many situations, minibuses which stand idle for much of the week could be replaced by pre-booked journeys aboard better-equipped vehicles, manned by PSV-qualified drivers, to deliver a better service at

the same or even lower cost. The benefits to the operator of the contract contribution, or perhaps the cost of adapting a dual-role vehicle, are obvious.

Local authorities and operators are now realising the synergy of their situation, and forging the working relationships which will help bring the issues of accessible transport back to professional, transport providers... to the benefit of operator and passenger.



Wandsworth deal

WANDSWORTH has turned to Automotive Leasing for the second time in two years to provide its vehicles under contract.

The West Sussex leasing group won Wandsworth's last contract, in 1994, when the borough wanted someone to run its 165-vehicle fleet on a contract basis. Having won that tender, AL is now supplying 75, mostly Iveco Daily

community buses on a further five-year contract. Maintenance will be at Wandsworth's own workshops.

Our photo shows the deal concluded. From left to right are Wandsworth contract transport officer Nick Smith, principle operation service manager John Pendlington, and AL's Simon Hall and Stuart Osman.

Systems in the pipeline


UNWIN Safety Systems is working with major bus manufacturers such as Wrights and Alexander to launch two new wheelchair systems this year.

The Yeovil-based company says a single-action wheelchair seatbelt device, which can be converted into a normal coach seat, should be available in Summer following further development.

The easy-to-use device ends time-costly seat removal, yet provides a full, three-point belt system for wheelchair passengers. By simply folding the seat squabs into position, clipping the belt end in place then tightening the device with a foot-operated bar, the passenger can be made secure in seconds.

"There will be at least one other product," said md Campbell McKee, who is keeping quiet about its nature. "Our long-term goal is to produce a fully-automatic, occupant-operated wheelchair restraint system.

"The major bus manufacturers are well down the line towards accessibility now, but the biggest problem remains getting operators to take the subject of disabled access on board."

 Unwin Safety Systems is on 01935 410920, fax 01935 410921.

Low-floors need the right kerbing

BUYING a low-floor, kneeling bus is only part of the accessible equation for, without the right kerbing, you're only half way there.

Kassel Kerb was devised in conjunction with Germany's KBG bus company in Kassel, where low-floor buses have been run for some years.

It is specially contoured so the vehicle's wheels can run in a special 'track' along the face of the kerb, which helps narrow the gap

with less risk of damaging the vehicle.


It uses high-tech concrete technology to provide a lasting kerb in two heights - 160 mm or 180 mm.

The most recent installations, along Centro's showcase low-floor project in Birmingham, use between 18 metres and 20 metres of Kassel kerb to allow consistent vehicle 'docking'.

"The uptake of the Kassel Kerb is prov-

ing an exciting development, and increasing numbers of bus operators are now involved in Quality Partnerships with local councils, developing bus stops," said Hugh Bone, of UK agents for Kassel, George Lines of Slough.

"During 1997, we will see a throughput of at least 2,000 metres of Kassel kerb."

 George Lines Ltd can be reached on 01753 685354, fax 01753 686031.

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Fund can help the rural op

START-UP costs for small-bus services in rural areas are preventing something like 70 per cent of villages from getting the bus habit.

The Rural Development Commission says the daily minibus service can be a lifeline for the elderly, often marooned at home, unable to reach essential services like hospitals and shops. Yet many commercial operators are still unaware of the financial help which can be provided by the Rural Transport Development Fund.

The fund makes a significant contribution to 'pump-priming' set-up costs including vehicle investment - providing up to half the cost, in some cases. A new booklet, *Country Lifelines*, explains the process of setting up a service and applying for the grant.

Contact Peter Roberts, at the RDC, on 01722 336255.



Unwin's tracking provides seating flexibility

System is installed by PTE

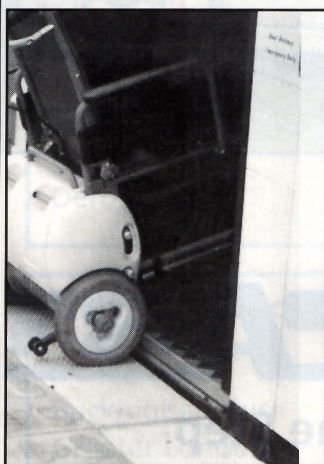
UNWIN'S Easilok wheelchair restraint system has been installed in Strathclyde PTE's most recent dial-a-ride bus.

The UVG-built Mercedes-Benz 16-seater, with space for two wheelchairs, uses Unwin's tracking to provide flexible seating arrangements. It has an electro-hydraulic lift and DPTAC features.

The Clydesdale Dial-a-Bus service has been operated by Muirs of Douglas Water for the past five years, and the company won the latest contract. The routes through Biggar, Hamilton and Lanark are semi-timetabled, with door-to-door service available on four weekdays. South Lanarkshire Council funds the part of the service which runs into its territory around Crawford and Abington.

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For more information on the Kassel Kerb, please contact

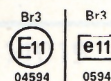
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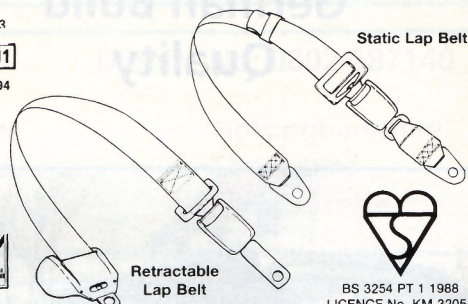
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Fuggles and slates cuts

FUGGLES of Benenden and Donald Benn says he deplores any reduction to local bus services which may be caused by the proposed Kent County Council budget cuts.

Uncertainty about the future of some local bus services in Kent is being caused by the proposed cuts which, effectively, have been imposed by central Government (CBW, 18 January) says Mr Benn.

"We deplore any reduction to local bus services which would be against the general trend of encouraging increased use of public transport," he says. Fuggles, which operates 19 coaches and buses, has pledged to maintain all its bus services in the Paddock Wood, Pembury and Tunbridge Wells areas "with no significant changes."

"Indeed, as part of our continuing programme of upgrading our fleet we have just introduced a new 'Easy Access' bus into this area. This will make travelling a lot easier for our customers, especially mums with buggies and the elderly or disabled."

The vehicle is the first UVG Dennis Dart SLF produced and Fuggles says it has already generated a 20 per cent increase in passengers on the Paddock Wood to Tunbridge Wells route, on which KCC has decided to improve bus stops, despite the cuts.



Martyn Industrials partner Lawrie Keen and former transport minister Steven Norris display the Decpac folding ramp at the Mobility Roadshow

A ramp that's portable

DECPAC is the latest alternative to a permanent wheelchair ramp - and one which may be a useful investment for coach drivers on tour.

This ingenious, folding ramp is neat enough to tuck away into a vehicle's many nooks and crannies. It is lightweight - down to 9 lb in the smallest version - and has non-slip surfaces, making it a useful tool for wheelchair helpers.

Decpac is made by Martyn Industrials in 10 sizes, able to conquer step heights from seven inches to 20 inches.

For full details, contact Martyn Industrials on 01933 651651, fax 01933 652864.

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Passenger Access Systems

Deans Powerleaf ramp, designed to be fitted in low chassis city buses, gives unrivalled access to public transport for passengers in wheelchairs.

The driver-operated ramp, cunningly hidden in a cassette within the bus floor, simply unhinges when the bus doors open to form a robust slope to the kerb or road level.

And it's not only people in wheelchairs who will benefit from the Powerleaf ramp; adults with pushchairs, and elderly people who have difficulty getting onto a bus, will all find travelling a much more pleasant experience.



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Emphasis on whole life

MELLOR Coachcraft has noticed a tendency to 'disguise' the accessible role of the purpose-built vehicles it supplies to local authorities.

Increasingly, says the Rochdale-based manufacturer, the orders which come in specify styling which helps conceal the purpose of the vehicle, rather than shouting the nature of the passengers.

And, at Mellor, almost anything's possible.

The company's investment in Computer-Aided Design (CAD) can allow variations to be introduced late in the production cycle... a characteristic feature of many orders, it says.

"The market for accessible transport was dominated by the rolling effect of county council competitive tendering," said a Mellor spokesman. "Selling the product at committee level became critically important in order that purchase ten-



This Mellor Iveco 49-10 dual-role accessible vehicle is fitted with a compact side lift

der specifications included truly significant features that could differentiate the major body builders' products."

Mellor says the emphasis has moved away from low price to whole-life costing, taking issues of maintenance, running costs and longevity more seriously.

"Safety is always of paramount significance in the bus market, and never more so than in 1997. Mellor design and development engineers are continually researching advanced materials and construction," says the company.

"Furthermore, Mellor is totally committed to exhaustive product testing of their stage carriage and accessible buses by independent test agencies."

For details of all Mellor Coachcraft products, ring 01706 860610, fax 01706 860402.



Accessible bus? Stowaway chair-lift and general appearance help it blend into the traffic

Agents' charter

RATCLIFF is to launch an agents' charter which lays down standards customers can expect from its sales team.

The charter carries with it the insistence that sales agents must be ISO 9000 accredited, and will maintain that accreditation. It also guarantees a genuine 24-hour, all-year service. The charter launch will be at the Commercial Vehicle and Bodywork Show at the NEC from 25 to 27 February.

Full details from Ratcliff, on 01707 325571, fax 01707 327752.

Park and ride

NOTTINGHAM car drivers' first introduction to accessible transport has been provided by Trent Buses, which has put three Optare Excels on the park and ride. The 40 seaters have three tip-up seats to accommodate wheelchair users and buggies, and will run on a 10-minute frequency from the Queens Drive Car Park. Trent operates 130 Optare vehicles.



Park-and-ride: Excel-lent news for Nottingham



AW GROUP

The future is orange

First new coach for 15 years at Suffolk operation features unique interior layout

by Mike Morgan

STUNNING fluorescent orange distinguishes the new Iveco/Beulas from any other coach on UK roads, never mind other vehicles in the Mulleys Motorways fleet.

Mulleys, the Bury St Edmunds-based associate company of fellow Suffolk coach company Beestons, is run by David Munson.

In the search for something different Mr Munson is guaranteed to attract attention. He said: "When you buy a new coach you want to get noticed." CBW is assured the colours are more startling than the photograph gives it credit. And it has an interior to match, complete with orange curtains and headrest covers. A centre, sunken toilet is fitted and the coach is the first Beulas for the UK with factory-fitted centre-mounted video monitor.

Meanwhile, the power unit in the Spanish-built Eurorider underframe is Iveco's 350 bhp diesel engine matched to an eight-speed ZF gearbox. Mr Munson says he is very happy with it and it is returning just over 11 mpg.

Mulleys' fleet contains 28 vehicles, including a handful of Bristol VRTs. The last new purchases for the group were Duple Dominant-bodied Leyland Leopards in 1981/2.



AUTOBUS

Small, but big on luxury

HILLARY'S of Prudhoe has recently taken delivery of a Mercedes-Benz 814D fitted with Autobus Nouvelle coach bodywork.

Supplied by Hughes DAF, the vehicle has 20 high-back coach seats fitted with lap and diagonal inertia reel seatbelts, forced-air ventilation, reading lights, full-draw curtains, Blaupunkt stereo radio/cassette/PA and has Nouvelle's standard 3.6 cubic metres of luggage space.

The company, based 10 miles west of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, is using the coach on school contract work, private hire and Summer tours.

FLEETMASTER

Fit for a Prince

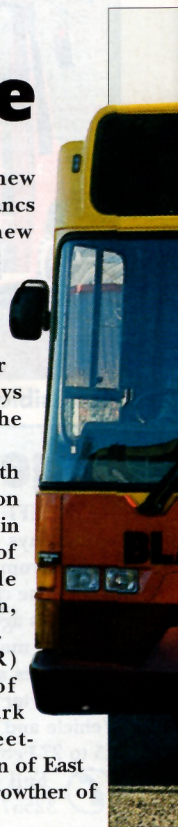
JUST weeks after being appointed sales agents for East Lancs, the Blackburn-based coachbuilder, Fleetmaster Bus & Coach of Horsham, secured its first order for new buses - three Scania L113s with East Lancs Flyte bodies for Black Prince of Leeds.

The new buses follow the purchase by Black Prince of two second-hand Routemasters from Fleetmaster last Autumn. Managing director, Brian Crowther, said: "I had it in mind to start 1997 with the addition of three new vehicles to the fleet although, when I spoke to Fleetmaster it was, in fact, to see if they could supply another used vehicle. In the course of the conversation they mentioned they had just started selling new buses, and they were able to offer three East Lancs Flytes at a competitive price."

The three Scantias are the

company's first new buses from East Lancs and its first new Scantias, although it currently runs a number of used Scantias and has used East Lancs for National Greenways and rebodys in the past.

In keeping with Black Prince tradition each bus is painted in a different version of the 50-vehicle company's maroon, red and yellow livery. ● Pictured: (L-R) David Crowther of Black Prince, Mark Stephenson of Fleetmaster, Phillip Hilton of East Lancs, and Brian Crowther of Black Prince





e for Mulleys



PLAXTON

H-A-D's Premiere service

H-A-D Coaches of Shotts has started 1997 by upgrading its express services from Lanarkshire to Glasgow using two new Volvo B10Ms with Plaxton Premiere 350 bodies.

Company director, Drew Law, said: "We've built the services up over the last 15 years and, by introducing higher-quality vehicles, we are reminding our customers that we provide a reliable and comfortable service - something which is extremely important at this time of year."

The Premieres, H-A-D's first new Plaxtons, will not be used solely on express services.

Mr Law said: "We specified 49/53 seaters with a demountable toilet which gives us the flexibility to use the coaches on Summer tour programmes when the express services are less busy."

"On weekdays we carry a lot of commuters and we find that the number of express passengers dips in the Summer."

CBW



'Discs brakes will be the norm On PSV fleets'

DISC brakes will become a common fitment on coaches and buses as the benefits and economics of operation force the market to follow trends in the truck sector, according to braking specialist Don of Manchester.

Among the advantages claimed for discs are: stable performance, easy pad replacement, easy examination, potential weight saving, less geometry bedding problems. These outweigh the disadvantages, says Don, and the company has put 10 years intensive research into its new generation pads to give it a competitive edge in disc brake technology.

While the precise composition of its 7450 pads remains a

Mike Morgan looks at some of the latest products for the coach and bus industry

closely-guarded secret, the company is keen to stress they have been designed for optimum performance.

Throughout the development programme the company's aim was to achieve the best possible balance between the disc's characteristics - high friction level, low-speed sensitivity, low sparking, high pad life, low noise, high disc life, low disc damage, low fade.

The company says operators

must consider whole-life costs and not just purchase price. Test results indicate that, in a fleet of 25 typical coaches or buses covering on average 200,000 kilometres per year, savings could amount to over £8,000 per year compared with the best alternative OE material and over £19,000 against a standard aftermarket pad.

Don has timed the aftermarket launch of 7450 to coincide with its appearance as an OE material.



Don disc test at Manchester

This means that operators can purchase replacement disc pads as advanced as those appearing on the next generation of commercial vehicles.

Contact Don at BBA Friction Ltd, Hendham Vale, Manchester M9 5SX. Tel 0161 205 2371 or fax on 0161 205 5501

Computer packages 'maximise efficiency'

SIMPLICITY, ease of use and infinite flexibility are claimed to be the key features of the Omnibus Systems set of computer packages, which can turn scheduling, timetabling, costing and rapid information retrieval into a straightforward and highly-efficient exercise.

Five distinct software packages can be adapted to existing computer technology, and bolted on to existing systems to give highly productive and professional quality scheduling, without the error and confusion associated with manual systems or limited systems of the past, says the company.

Within five years, Oldham-based Omnibus Systems says it has grown to become the market leader in scheduling packages, and now supplies over 30 bus operators in the UK and overseas. Customers range from the smaller bespoke independent operators such as Maynes of Manchester, through municipals and smaller company operators, to subsidiaries of the four main UK bus groups, up to the 1,000-vehicle operator GM Buses North.

Each company has found the systems adaptable for its own particular circumstances, relatively inexpensive, and up to any size of task - be it the rescheduling of a complete city network, or the production of accurate timetables for printing in book format.

Omnibus Systems founder Peter Crichton, who used to work at Shearings, said his secret of success was producing exactly what each operator required. "It's no use coming along with a well-developed, but inflexible system. Bus operators have often spent vast sums of money on very sophisticated computer systems and are



Thirty ops use Omnibus software

looking for something which they can have total control over, but which will deliver more productivity and give them the range of flexibility to try out new ideas," he said.

"We have devised programmes which give companies that flexibility and automatically key into their way of doing things. We don't need to teach them a new language or reorganise the way they do things - we merely home in on the particular tasks they need to handle, and do it faster and more efficiently."

Evidence of the company's success comes

from a growing list of satisfied users, who occasionally need to bolt on new functions into their existing software. The five existing systems cover the whole gamut from improving scheduling to delivering easy to use printouts for duty rosters, public timetables, duty boards, and time and mileage statistics.

These are available singly or as an interconnected series system. Complete networks such as those at Oxford Bus and Provincial Bus can be rejigged, combining the best use of resources within existing negotiated parameters.

More mundane tasks such as printing out documents and the administrative backup in traffic operation can be directly connected to existing desktop publishing systems or existing software packages.

The five packages currently available - OmniBASE, OmniTIMES, OmniCREW, OmniROTA and OmniSTOP, all offer individual or combined functions which can revolutionise traffic operations and bring in real savings of time and money.

"We're not salesmen," said Mr Crichton. "We are technicians with a traffic operations background, who like to think we can offer the exact solution that is needed, with top-class backup and training, to make sure that the greatest efficiency can be gleaned from our systems."

New products on their way during 1997 will include an automatic crew scheduling package and new versions for Windows 95 and Windows NT.

For further information contact Peter Crichton at Omnibus Systems on 0161-628 9818.



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1990 (G) VAN HOOL ALIZEE DAF
SB2300, 51 seats, centre sunken toilet,
TV/video, Sutrak air con, MoT till
Feb '98 **£79,500 + VAT**

1990 (H) CAETANO ALGARVE Volvo
B10M. 53 seats + courier seat,
Suttrak air con. MoT till Sept '97
£78,000 + VAT

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BOVA FUTURA
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51 recliners + courier,
toilet, bunk, fridge, video,
hot & cold water, MoT
Dec 97,
excellent condition.

£67,500 + VAT ono

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(W. Yorks)

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1987 MERCEDES 307D,
12 seater, high roof, MoT
5/97 **£3,750**

1982 DAF MB200 JONCK-
HEERE, 53 r/seats, MoT
2/98 **£14,500**

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video, h/drinks **£29,950**

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owned from new, MoT 9/97
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PA, fitted belts,
tax, long MoT

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LDV 400
AUTOBUS
CLASSIQUE

(M) April '95

16 M2 seats with 3 point
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LIKE NEW

£17,500 + VAT

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1994 L reg & 1995 N reg
49 seaters, auto transmission,
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Immaculate condition.

New gearbox in L reg.

£127,000 & £147,000
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take any article in part ex with cash

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SUPREME IV

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MoT Dec '97

£4250 ono

BEDFORD YMT
MOSELEY CONTINENTAL

53 seats, MoT April '97

£3250 ono

Both vehicles in very good condition
inside and out. Both painted white.

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67337/CM

MCW
METROBUSES

1981 W reg, Metrobuses,
77 seats, single door, choice of
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Royce C6 engine with Voith
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5-speed, 1990 'H', 20-seater,
ex-long wheelbase.

Dormobile body,
M&M conversion, full soft trim,
high back seats, belts,
luggage racks, power door,
power steering.

Tax & Test August '97

£9,995

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10 metre,
45-seater coach

Must be in good clean
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**94 DENNIS JAVELIN 240 PLAXTON
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ZF gearbox, 51R+C, video/monitor,
radio/PA/cassette,
drivers bunk, drinks machine,
continental door and rear sunken toilet.



**91 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON
3500**

ZF gearbox, 53R+C, radio/PA/ cassette
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**91 DAF SB2300 DHTD PLAXTON
3200**

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PREMIERE 350**

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CONTACT NUMBERS

OFFICE CONTACT

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Bob Rossiter 0589 444736

WEST MIDLANDS & WALES

Bob Nevitt 0585 594614

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continental door and centre sunken toilet.



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EXCALIBUR**

ZF gearbox, 49R+C, video/monitor,
radio/PA/cassette, drinks machine,
refrigerator, continental door.



93 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON EXCALIBUR

ZF gearbox, 47R+C, retarder, air condi-
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sunken toilet.



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1980 'V' reg BEDFORD YMT

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pretty good condition,
ideal contract vehicle

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BEDFORD. 1982 YNT Plaxton Supreme
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gearbox, 49 R+C, video, monitor,
radio/PA/cassette, driver's bunk, drinks
machine, refrigerator, continental door
and centre sunken toilet. For further
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1983 'Y',
52 seats

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Quoting 'BC'

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1979

BRISTOL VRT

'T' reg, ex Southend Transport,
74 seats, good tyres, long test,
very good condition

£5,000 + VAT

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67953/BR

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1991 (H) 325bhp CUMMINS VAN HOOL T815

49/53 Recliners + Courier Seat,
Centre Toilet, Hot Drinks Machine,
Fridge, Carpets & Curtains, TV &
Video, PA & Radio, Double Glazed,
New MoT.

OWNED FROM NEW

£79,000 + VAT

Price includes painting base colour

Williamson's Holidays

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67341/CU

DAF MB230 VAN HOOL

ALIZEE

November 1987

Centre toilet and continental door, twin screen video, hot drinks, fridge and microwave facility.

To be sold with rear demountable servery unit and five way rear seat. 46/51 reclining seats. Tables available if required. Ex-Everton FC team coach, excellent condition throughout.

MoT until November 1997.

£58,500 plus VAT ONO.

DAF SB3000 DKV VAN

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Centre toilet and continental door, twin screen video, hot drinks and 51 reclining seats.

Excellent condition throughout.

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49 recliner seat executive coach with TV/video, toilet, tea machine, courier seat, re-conditioned gearbox fitted 17/12/96, clean coach, selling due 0 to replacement.

£18,950 ono + VAT

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**Van Hool
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Up to 55 seats available, currently configured at 39 seat, full exec (tables, centre WC, boiler, video), 12 months MoT, belts.

£49,000 + VAT ovno

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1983 Y reg DAF 3500. Full exec, owned since new, £25,000 + VAT. Howletts Coaches, Winslow, Bucks. 01296 713201.

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49, Toilet, cont door, plain white, 1989 'F'

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ALGARVE II. 49 + rear toilet, cont door, drinks, plain white

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ALGARVE II. 49 + rear toilet, cont door, drinks, belts, plain white

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**1991 (J) DENNIS DART
CARLYLE BUS (10 mtr)**

40 Seater + 20 Standlee, Luggage Pen, Diptac Spec, Split Step Entrance, new MoT, owned from new

£43,000 + VAT

Also

**1992 (K) DENNIS DART
MARSHALL BUS**

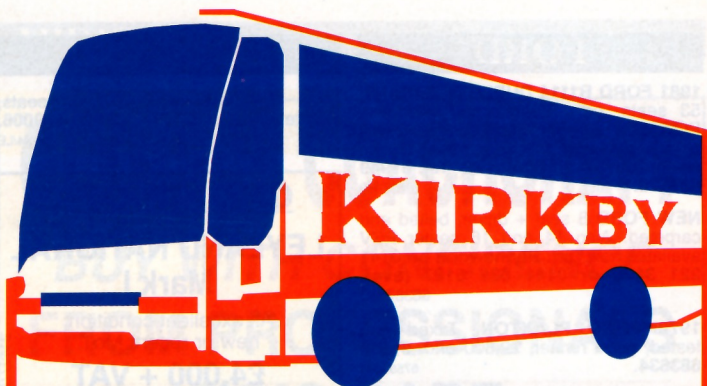
As above but 17 standee
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Price includes painting base colour

Williamson's

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57 fixed seats, R & PA

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49 seats, crew seat, centre toilet, Webasto, air conditioning, TV/video, very high specification

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Van Hool Alizee

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Jonckheere Deauville P45L

48 seats, rear toilet, window blinds, telma retarder, R & PA

**1992 Leyland Tiger 290 Auto
Plaxton Paramount 3500**

49 seats, crew seat, rear toilet, rear continental door, R & PA, telma retarder, choice of two.



1989 Volvo B10M

Plaxton Paramount 3500

53 seats, crew seat, R & PA, window blinds



1995 Volvo B10M

Plaxton Premiere 320

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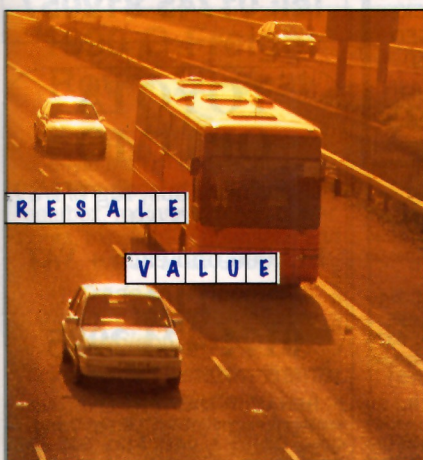
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VOLVO

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1981 FORD R1114 DUPLÉ DOMINANT. 53 seats, crew seat, tinted windows, POD, MoT July '97, good condition, well above average for year, used daily, owner driver, £4,500 ono. **Tel: 01949 837526.** 67597/FO

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FREIGHT ROVER. Luxury 16 high back seats, perfect condition, K reg, £10,500. **Evenings: 01299 266647, daytime 01299 270265.** 67790/FR

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Iveco 49.10 E-J reg, all with minimum 6 months MoT.

Prices from £4995

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LEYLAND

1976 LEYLAND LEOPARD, 51 seats, SA, tested Aug '97. Tel: 01323 899006. 67784/LE

CHOICE OF 8

LEYLAND NATIONAL Mark I

All excellent condition, new or recent MoT.

£4,000 + VAT

(Tyres excluded)

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1980 (W) LEOPARD. Express doors, 49 seater, MoT Jan 98, £4000. 1982 (X) as above, MoT Oct. 97, £4500. Both S.A, seatbelts. **Barry Coopers, Warrington. 01925 267321.** 67642/LE

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MAN

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31/35 Recliners + Courier Seat, Shades Fresh Water Toilet, Hot Drinks Machine, Carpets & Curtains, Tables & Lamps (reduces seating), TV & Video, PA & Radio, new MoT

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MERCEDES

MERCEDES 814D PLAXTON BEAVER MIDI COACH

1995, Mot March '98.

33 coach seats with seat belts, show curtains, plain white livery.

Approx 100,000 km.

One owner, v.clean, good size boot, power door

P.O.A.

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MERCEDES SERVICE BUSES, available now manual + auto with new DIPTAC, 300mm + floor height, 29 + standees, also 33 + 12 standees, auto + Telma, choice of bodies. **Tel: Blythwood Motors, Glasgow on 0141 221 3165 or 0141 639 6107 evenings.** **MERCEDES COACH SPEC,** 37 seat 814L plus 33 seats 814, forced air, plus 29 and 25 seat 711 turbo, in stock now, 611 + 711 turbo conversions for 24 seat p/door, large boot available now, with 611 turbo w/chair/24 coach seats or 6 wheel chairs, 412 16 seaters also 412 16/5 wheelchairs all in stock now. **Tel: Blythwood Motors, Glasgow on 0141 221 3165 or 0141 639 6107 evenings.** 66388/ME

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MAN



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32 reclining seats with belts, rear offside toilet, drinks machine and server, o/s continental door, radio/PA/TV and video, Webasto heater. In immaculate condition and to be sold with 12 months MOT

£69,750 + VAT

Would p/x for late Leopard or early 11 metre Tiger but must be clean

For more details phone

Andy James on

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Plaxton Beaver 25 seater, 2 tables, tinted windows, curtains. Tested till July 97.

£45,000 + VAT

Will take PX

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B & D HOLT

F Mercedes 811 Starrider buses, 26/29/31 seats, 12 months test, straight out of service **P.O.A.**
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MINIS & MIDIS

MINICOACH/BUS

1994 (L) Mercedes 711, Marshall 29 coach seats, dest, power door, Grafitti moquette, very tidy **£31,950**

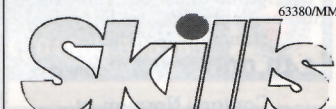
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£13,000 ono each + VAT

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21 seat luxury coach on
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This coach was taken in
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model with 24 seats
+ air conditioning

Also available mid February
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21 seater with tables, new
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Our new demonstrator is
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Fiahsa reclining + courier,
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radio/PA system



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MERCEDES 412 SPRINTER, 16 seat, high spec, O/S emergency door,
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NEW LEYLAND DAF CONVOY, high roof, luxury conversion, 16 high back seats, lap and
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Carlyle Mark II bodywork, Isuzu
2.8 litre diesel engine, 5-speed
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TurboDaily, Robin Hood bodywork,
5 speed manual, 23 or 25 seats,
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limited choice, price includes all
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reconditioned engine with 12
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Dealer for Autobus

SUPPLIER OF THE NOUVELLE EXECUTIF 1995 MIDICOACH OF THE YEAR
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MERCEDES 814D NOUVELLE EXECUTIF

MERCEDES 711D, 24 seats with courier and boot

EARLY DELIVERY

MERCEDES 412D SPRINTER, 16 seats

LEYLAND DAF 400, 16 seats

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1991 h reg mercedes 609D, 19 + standees, service bus

1990 H REG FREIGHT ROVER, 16 seater

1989 G REG FORD TRANSIT, 10 seats and wheelchair 11ft

1989 MERCEDES 308D, 14 seater

1989 G REG BEDFORD Midi, 14 seater

1986 C REG RENAULT MASTER, 14 seater

1976 LEYLAND LEOPARD, 53 seater, Plaxton Supreme

Telephone Steve Peach Tel: (01302) 770863/(0836) 551020

Fax: (01302) 771666

AUTOBUS

Part exchange available on all new vehicles. Finance arranged subject to status

67878/MB



WINNERS OF MINICOACH OF THE YEAR 1995/96
(up to 15 seats)

TAIL-LIFT VEHICLES

Unregistered LDV 400, diesel, 12 seats, Ricon tail lift, pld, top slide windows . £25,500

K reg LDV 400, diesel, turbo engine, 16 seats, semi-auto, tail-lift, all seats removable,

white exterior, red/grey interior . £10,000

G reg TALBOT FREEWAY, 16 seats, Ratcliffe internal tail-lift, lap and diagonal seat

restraints, saloon heating, all seats removable . £5,950

ALL PRICES + VAT

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Please phone for current stock list covering approximately 20 minicoaches

67880/MB



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From 8 to 14 passengers with options for genuine wheelchair access, our range of smaller luxury transporters are economical and truly exotic.



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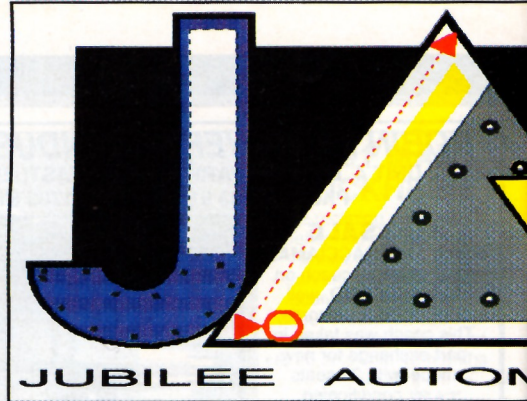
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23 seats, Diptac handrails, Perkins 6-litre/Allison 4-speed gearbox, power steering, power door, attractive red patterned moquette seating, full soft trim interior, extra ventilators, saloon heating, very good specification. Choice of six, **£6,995 each**

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.....£63,950

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90 TRANSIT, 15 PSV diesel. Tested.

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88 TRANSIT, 12 PSV, SWB, Diesel

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88 TRANSIT, 14 diesel, PSV

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84 LEYLAND ROYAL TIGER VAN HOOL, SA, exec, 49/53, video

85 SETRA, exec, 49, toilet, TV

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84 MAN VAN HOOL ASTRON, 61 seats, toilet

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49 + courier, toilet, fridge, coffee machine, TV/video, radio/pa, continental door, double glazing, webasto, air conditioning.
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1995 M VOLVO B10M MK IV JONCKHEERE, 51 seats, centre toilet, wired for TV and video, white exterior, 100,000 km.
1995 M MERCEDES 814, 33 seats, power door, large boot, white exterior, long MoT.
1993 K VOLVO B6 CAETANO ALGARVE 35 seats, d/glazed rear cont door, radio, PA double glazed, MoT Jan, '97.
1991 J IVECO 4910 Mellor coach built, 12 seats/6 wheelchairs, MoT Oct '97.
1991 H TOYOTA OPTIMO MKII, 17/21 seats, demountable toilet, 130,000 miles, MoT May '97.
1990 H MERCEDES 811D, PMT, AML, coach built, 33 seats, luggage racks, power door, radio, white/red, exterior, long MoT.
1989 G IVECO 49.10 Robin Hood, 23/25 seats, luggage pen, power door, choice of 5.
1987 E OPTARE CITYPACER 2.5 TURBO, 25 coach seats, power door, white exterior, MoT May '97.
1985 B LEYLAND TIGER 245 DUPLER LASER II, semi auto, 53 seats, power door, long MoT.
1983 Y FORD 360 T DUPLER DOMINANT IV, 8.5 metre, 35 recent re-trimmed seats, p/door, radio/PA, MoT Dec '96.
1982 Y BOVA EUROPA, recent DAF engine, 52 recliners, courier seat, MoT June '97.

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1988 DAF MD230 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 49 recliners, crew seat, rear continental door, sunken toilet, hot water boiler, radio/tape/PA, ferry lift, Splitter gearbox, driver's bunk, interior grey/red, exterior white/orange/light grey, MoT 22/12/97.....**£49,500**

1988 BOVA FUTURA FHD, 49 recliners, crew seat, seat belts to all seats, air conditioning, centre sunken toilet, centre continental door, hot water boiler, fridge, double glazing, Peage window, radio/tape, interior brown/beige, exterior white/green/red, new MoT.....**£66,500**

1986 (AUG) DAF SB 2300 DHS DUPLER 340, 53 recliners, crew seat, centre continental door, centre sunken toilet, radio/tape/PA, curtains, interior, fawn/brown/orange, white, MoT 8/8/97.....**£32,500**

1986 (OCT) DAF MB200 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, 53 fixed seats (retrimmed), seat belts to all seats, tinted windows, exterior, white, interior fawn/brown/orange/yellow stripes, MoT 25/6/97.....**£36,500**

1985 DAF SB2300HDS PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, 53 recliners, radio/tape, tinted windows, Telma, Splitter gearbox, brown/fawn, interior, exterior blue/white MoT 21/12/97.....**£29,500**

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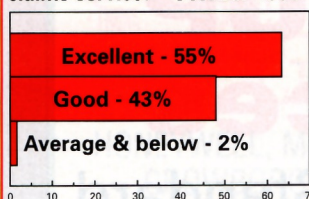
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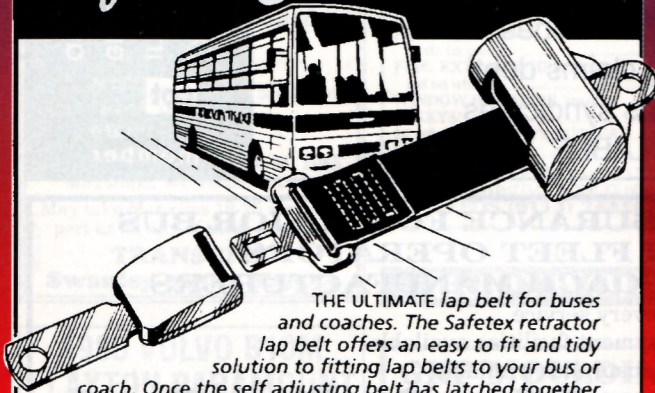
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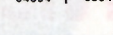
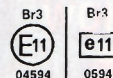
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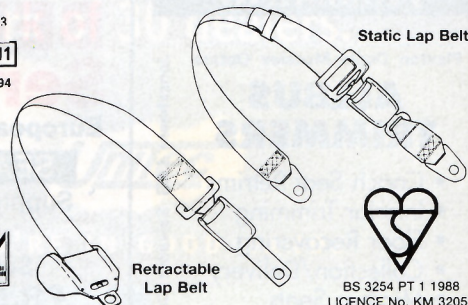
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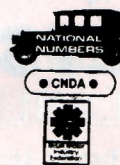
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- (1) Public Transport timetable leaflets and booklets
- (2) Public Transport Map & Guide

The contract will include the production and printing of each item to pre-determined timescales. The supplier may be expected to undertake distribution of pre-packaged quantities of leaflets or booklets to a number of outlets in the Nottinghamshire area as agreed with the County Council.

A single contract may be let for the whole of this work. However the County Council reserves the right to award separate contracts for individual elements.

For a detailed Specification, Invitation to Tender and Conditions of Contract please contact:-

**Nottinghamshire County Council
Public Transport Group
Trent Bridge House
Fox Road
West Bridgford
Nottingham NG2 6BJ
FAO: Dave Layton. Documents will be posted.**

Tel: Nottm (0115) 977 4520, Fax: (0115) 977 4353.

The closing date for expressions of interest is 20 February, 1997. The closing date for submission of tenders is 27 February, 1997. The expected start date for the contracts is April, 1997.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



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▼ Service

UniTec post for Hunter

Regional service manager of Scotland and North

OPTARE Group subsidiary UniTec has appointed its third regional service manager in recognition of the expansion of service support needed as its sales of integral products grow.

Steve Hunter, 30, is the new north area manager covering the whole of Scotland and North-

by Andrew Jarosz

ern England from Leeds to the border. He joins UniTec from the Northern Regional Health Authority where he worked as a rehabilitation engineer involved in design and production work on mobility matters, such as wheelchairs

and accessibility.

Mr Hunter spent 10 years with Cowie Group subsidiary Northumbria Motor Services at Newcastle, ending up as technical instructor, having started in 1982 as an apprentice fitter with Northumbria's predecessor United Automobile Services.

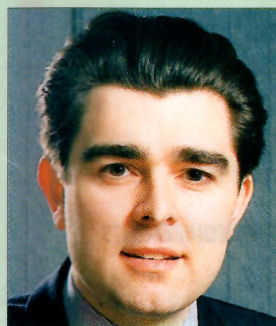


Steve Hunter: joins from health authority

▼ Coach

Associate partner

IAN Jones (left) has joined north west solicitors Lacey Mawer as an associate partner. His portfolio of coach and bus companies includes one of the largest groups in the country. Mr Jones, 29, says the trend to self-insurance among large plcs makes them adopt a much more commercial approach to settling claims."



▼ Coach

Mitchell joins NatEx

NATIONAL Express has a national sales manager for airport services. **Mark Mitchell** reports to director of airport services **Steve McAleavy**.

Mr Mitchell, 29, joins NatEx from Holiday Autos where he was national account manager. His new role is to promote Airlink and

Flightlink express coach services among travel trade retailers, tour operators, airlines and others. NatEx chief executive, **Bob Wiper** said: "The creation of this senior position reflects National Express' serious commitment to the airport services division."



Payment (please tick as appropriate)

Coach and Bus Week

	1 year	2 years	3 years
UK	£49.00	£88.00	£125.00
Eire/Europe 1 year	£92.00	Airmail 1 year	£124.00

Transit (Existing Coach and Bus Week Subscribers)

	1 year	2 years	3 years
UK	£72.00	£129.00	£183.00
Eire/Europe 1 year	£115.00	Airmail 1 year	£147.00

Coach and Bus Week and Transit (New Subscribers)

	1 year	2 years	3 years
UK	£121.00	£217.00	£308.00
Eire/Europe 1 year	£164.00	Airmail 1 year	£196.00

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS. YOUR COMPANY DETAILS

1. What is your primary job title?

(Tick one only)

- Owner/Director ☐ 01
 Senior/General Manager ☐ 02
 Engineering/Service Manager ☐ 03
 Other (please specify) ☐ 04

2. What is your company's main business function?

- Bus Operator ☐ 01
 Coach Operator ☐ 05
 Coach & Bus Operator ☐ 02
 Local Government ☐ 03
 Other (please specify) ☐ 04

3. How many vehicles does your company own/operate?

(Tick all that apply)

- | | Buses | Coaches |
|----------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1-5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 01 | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 |
| 6-10 | <input type="checkbox"/> 02 | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 |
| 11-15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 03 | <input type="checkbox"/> 12 |
| 16-25 | <input type="checkbox"/> 04 | <input type="checkbox"/> 13 |
| 26-39 | <input type="checkbox"/> 05 | <input type="checkbox"/> 14 |
| 40-100 | <input type="checkbox"/> 06 | <input type="checkbox"/> 15 |
| 101-400 | <input type="checkbox"/> 07 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16 |
| 401-1000 | <input type="checkbox"/> 08 | <input type="checkbox"/> 17 |
| 1000+ | <input type="checkbox"/> 09 | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 |

4. Do you have responsibility for the recommendation/ purchase and/or specification of the following?

(Tick all that apply)

- | | Pur | Spec | Rec |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Vehicles | <input type="checkbox"/> 01 | <input type="checkbox"/> 12 | <input type="checkbox"/> 23 |
| Parts/Spares | <input type="checkbox"/> 02 | <input type="checkbox"/> 13 | <input type="checkbox"/> 24 |
| Oil/Fuel | <input type="checkbox"/> 03 | <input type="checkbox"/> 14 | <input type="checkbox"/> 25 |
| Breakdown | <input type="checkbox"/> 04 | <input type="checkbox"/> 15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 26 |
| Insurance/Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> 05 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 27 |
| Fuel Cards | <input type="checkbox"/> 06 | <input type="checkbox"/> 17 | <input type="checkbox"/> 28 |
| Training | <input type="checkbox"/> 07 | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 | <input type="checkbox"/> 29 |
| Venue/Attraction Tickets | <input type="checkbox"/> 08 | <input type="checkbox"/> 19 | <input type="checkbox"/> 30 |
| Ferry Crossing | <input type="checkbox"/> 09 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20 | <input type="checkbox"/> 31 |
| Hotel Bookings | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> 21 | <input type="checkbox"/> 32 |
| Theatre Tickets | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 | <input type="checkbox"/> 22 | <input type="checkbox"/> 33 |
| Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> 34 | | |

5. What type of work does your company undertake?

(Tick all that apply)

- Private Hire ☐ 01
 Day Excursions ☐ 02
 British Tours ☐ 03
 European Tours ☐ 04
 Local Government Contracts ☐ 05
 Emergency/Breakdown Services ☐ 06

By cheque: I enclose a cheque for £ made payable to
 EMAP Business Communications.

By credit card: I authorise you to debit my Mastercard/VISA/

DinersClub/Amex card for the amount of £

Expiry date/...../.....

By invoice: Please invoice my company ☐

Card number:

Signed

Name

Job Title

Company

Address

Postcode.....Tel:

Return to: Kerry Young, *Coach and Bus Week*, Subscription Department,
 EMAP Automotive Ltd., Wentworth House, Wentworth Street,
 Peterborough PE1 1DS
 or phone 01733 467051 today

HIGH QUALITY LOW MILEAGE COACHES FROM OUR HIRE FLEET

1995 M EOS 90 49R, toilet, air conditioning
 1995 M DAF SB3000 WS Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
 1995 M DAF SB3000 WS Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
 1995 M DAF SB3000 WS Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 55R
 1994 L EOS 90 49R, toilet
 1994 L DAF WS3000 Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/ Toilet
 1994 L DAF KS3000 Easishift Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
 1994 L DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/ Toilet
 1994 L DAF SB3000 Int Retarder, Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
 1994 L DAF HS2700 Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
 1994 L MB230LT Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/ Toilet
 1993 K DAF KS3000 Auto Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
 1993 K DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/ Toilet
 1993 K DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/ Toilet
 1993 K DAF SB3000 Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
 1993 K DAF SM230LT Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R Toilet
 1992 J DAF SB2305 Duple 340, 57R
 1992 J DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R Toilet
 1992 J DAF MB230LB Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/ Toilet

BUSES FROM OUR HIRE FLEET

1996 N DAF SB220 Auto, Northern Counties Paladin, 49 str bus
 1995 M DAF SB220 Auto, Northern Counties Paladin, 49 str bus
 1995 M DAF DB250 Auto, Northern Counties Palatine II, 77 str double deck bus
 1995 M DENNIS DART Auto, 10M, Plaxton Pointer, 40 str bus
 1992 J DAF SB220 Auto, Ikarus Citibus, 48 str bus

1992 J DAF MB230 LT Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/ Toilet
 1991 H DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R Toilet
 1990 G MB230LB Van Hool Alizee 'SH', 53R/Toilet
 1990 G MB230LB Van Hool Alizee 'H'
 1990 G DAF SB3000 Van Hool 'H', 49/Toilet
 1989 F DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 53R
 1989 F DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH' 51R/Toilet
 1989 F DAF MB230LT Plaxton 3500, 51R/Toilet
 1989 F DAF MB230LB Plaxton 3500, 52R
 1989 F DAF MB 230LB Plaxton, 51R/Toilet
 1988 E DAF SB2300 Van Hool Alizee, 51R/Toilet
 1988 E DAF SB2300 Duple 340SL, 53R
 1988 E DAF MB230LT Plaxton 3500, 51R/Toilet
 1988 E DAF MB230LB Plaxton 3500, 53R

HIGH QUALITY USED COACHES

1995 M MERCEDES 709, Autobus Classique, 25 str, bus seats
 1993 K MAN, Jonckheere Deauville, 51R/Toilet
 1993 K DAF SB2700 HS, Caetano Algarve, 53R
 1991 (H) DAF SB2305 Plaxton 3200 LD 55R
 1990 G VOLVO B10M Plaxton 3500, 49R/Toilet
 1990 G DAF DHTD Duple 320, 57R
 1990 (G) SB3000 VAN HOOL ALIZEE DH, 51R/toilet, air con
 1991 (H) DAF SB2305 Plaxton 3200 LD 55R
 1989 G SCANIA K113 Van Hool Alizee 'SH', 49R/ Toilet
 1989 F DAF MB230 Van Hool Alizee 'SH', 53R/ Toilet
 1989 (F) SB3000 VAN HOOL ALIZEE DH, 51R/toilet, air con
 1989 (F) VOLVO B10M Van Hool Alizee H, 53R
 1989 PP BOVA FUTURA FHD, 49R/Toilet
 1989 SB3000 Plaxton 3500, 51/Toilet
 1988 VOLVO B10M, Plaxton 3500, 49R/Toilet
 1988 PP BOVA FUTURA FHD, 49R/Toilet
 1988 E DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R Toilet
 1988 E SB3000 Van Hool Alizee SH 49R/Toilet
 1987 E DAF SB2300 Plaxton 3500, 53R, air conditioned
 1987 D DAF 2300 Van Hool Alizee 'H', 49R/Toilet
 1987 D DAF SB 230LB Duple 340, 53R
 1987 D VAN HOOL T815 51/toilet

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● *It's under your control –*

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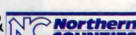
PARTS & SERVICE



PARTS & SERVICE



PARTS & SERVICE



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